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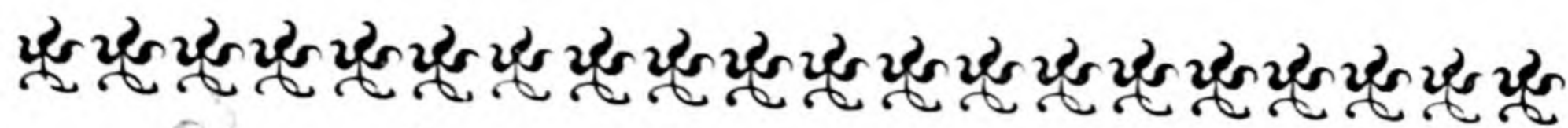
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THE SOUNDS OF
STANDARD ENGLISH

WITH SOME NOTES ON
ACCIDENCE AND SYNTAX

by

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INTRODUCTION

SOME twenty years ago an enterprising scientist spent some time in an African forest, securely housed in a cage and furnished with instruments to record the sounds uttered by such animals as might grow used enough to the intruder to forget their suspicion and to recommence their normal activities. These records were afterwards reproduced by a gramophone in a zoological garden in Europe where monkeys were confined, and the captives responded to the sounds made, now with gusts of merriment and now with cries of panic, making it clear that the simian language of the jungle was intelligible in other circles than that in which it was actually uttered.

A dog, however, habitually domiciled in Lancashire and taken for a holiday to Devonshire, will for some little time be set upon by the Devon dogs. This may be because the air and water of each county imparts to its animal life a distinctive smell; or it may be that the language of the domestic dog—which is known to have many more expressions than that of a prairie dog—is differentiated by geographical peculiarities.

Be the case as it may with the other animals, men's language at any rate is, as we all know, in spite of conquest and courtship, of trade and travel, not everywhere uniform. When Huckleberry Finn explained to the negro who shared his travels that a Frenchman did not make the same sounds as the two companions did to indicate bread and other common things, the negro

exclaimed, 'If the Frenchman's a man, why can't he speak like a man?' Most of us are more sophisticated than Huck's assistant, and accept without curiosity and without criticism the fact that a difference of language often aggravates the other differences between two nations.

But the trouble to which the tower-builders in Babel have stood sponsors reaches further than this. A Yorkshire man suddenly transplanted into a Cornish village could not, it has been said, make himself understood by language alone. Whether this be the case or not, it is notorious that the language spoken in the United States, in Australia, and in England, though it would in all cases be claimed by the speakers to be English (not French or German), is somewhat different—partly in vocabulary, partly in pronunciation, partly in intonation, partly in accidence and syntax. What is the reason of this, and why is it that in England itself there are a large number of dialects, all English, yet distinguished in these various respects?

To answer these questions the reader's attention must be directed to a general observation whose sweep is far-reaching. Not one of us utters with precise exactness the same sounds when we wish to repeat our words. No living creature can do this perfectly; a gramophone alone has the power. Naturally two persons are still less able to utter quite identical sounds, and this constitutes one of the difficulties in learning to speak a foreign language. The teacher does not make exactly the same sounds each time he says a word for the pupil to imitate. As against all this, we have to observe that in spite of this incessant variation in the sounds we utter, we recognize and others recognize a sort of general idea to which each time we approximate—just as men can have

a common and identical general idea of what a horse is, although no two horses are identical. Yet the type of horse may be different in different countries or may become different—just as the idea associated by some whole nation with a word like *virtue*, *humility*, *courage*, or *patriotism*, may change and may be different in different places and in different ages. So the sounds used to denote a certain thing at any given time and place and in a given society will be sufficiently fixed as a norm for all the speakers of that time, place, and society to understand one another, but the sounds may change in course of time, and long separation may make the changes too great for mutual intelligibility between those who once spoke alike. This general aspect of the case once understood, we can without much difficulty answer our questions.

We have first to go back in thought some fifteen hundred years. When Roman civilization was no longer able to maintain itself in its extremities, and wild tribes began to overrun the frontiers most remote, the bulk of Britain had become permeated with Latin culture. Inoculation continued through four hundred years had made the people proud of their part in the Roman Empire. Keltic speech persisted in the more savage districts, or at least outside the boundaries of the Empire, but within it it is by no means clear that any language but Latin was spoken largely, if at all. In any case, since the Teutonic invaders of this country are believed to have exterminated these civilized provincials or to have expelled them to the Continent or to the savage outskirts of our island, the net linguistic result of the invasion was that Teutonic tongues were to be heard from Kent to Cumberland and from Devon to Durham.

But it was not one uniform language that was spoken. Although the invaders were of one stock, and though their common forefathers centuries earlier spoke one primitive speech, yet when they came to this island, they could be distinguished into several separate tribes or peoples and spoke what could be distinguished and classified as three or four different dialects.

A very rough idea of what happened may be given by such a summary as this :

1. Jutes, coming from Jutland in Denmark, settled in Kent, South Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight.

2. Angles, from Schleswig, settled in the Midlands and north of the Humber.

3. Saxons, from Holstein, occupied Essex and most of the country south of the Thames from Sussex to Devon.

When the welter of the migrations and conquests comes into the light of precise history, we find that the dialects spoken by these peoples can be classified into three great divisions : Kentish, Saxon, and Anglian—the last itself falling into two subdivisions, Northumbrian and Mercian.

All these dialects, it must be repeated, were types of Teutonic speech and, to be more precise, of the Teutonic spoken in the lands adjoining the coast as opposed to the High German spoken inland. But since all languages are continually changing, languages spoken over considerable tracts of country develop local dialects, and thus the dialects brought with them by the Teutonic conquerors of Britain, while all similar, were also all distinct.

Nor is this all. In the centuries that followed, these various dialects were variously altered by local experiences, such as fusion with Britons, here in considerable, there in negligible numbers, intermixture with Scandi-

navians, and subjugation by the Normans, who during their stay in Normandy had exchanged their Scandinavian speech for a French dialect. Besides, the Christian missionaries infused something of Latin wherever they went, and at a later time the scholars of the Renaissance and the admirers of Italian and of French literature wove yet more plies into the structure of the literary dialect. As a consequence, there has grown up a vast number of local dialects in this country.

We may illustrate how accidents of local experience will have modified development from what has happened in the last three centuries. Our settlers in America and Australia went in various proportions from different parts of these islands, taking with them their special local dialects. The admixtures, thus resulting, of dialects differing in themselves and blended in different proportions in different settlements, naturally produced forms of English speech with characteristics so distinct as to make it possible to classify them into groups—Canadian, Australian, United States—each group conforming to some type easy to define.

All of these local dialects are equally entitled to be regarded as English, since for centuries now the Teutonic speech of any dwellers in this land or of their descendants has been so named. But one of these dialects has secured an indisputable primacy as the dialect spoken by the educated in every part of England. This dialect was, in the first instance, the dialect spoken in the district which includes London, Oxford, Warwick, and Cambridge, but for reasons that can be soon stated it came to be what we may call the Standard dialect—‘English’, as many would say, in contrast to a provincial dialect.

This Standard dialect was spoken by the Court: the

Bar, the Universities, the Stage spoke it : Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton and, with scarcely one exception, all our great authors wrote it. Moreover, to the Court and to the Universities flocked men from every county, and so this dialect became a sort of 'common measure' of all other dialects, enriched with anything of worth that any other dialect could afford it, and with any asperities it might at first have had, smoothed from it by so many tongues of diverse practice. Thus it gained a start over its rivals which it would be waste of time now to try to overtake. Instead, men and women are educated to use it.

There has been a disposition in some quarters to regard the use of the Standard English dialect as the prerogative of a class. It has even been said that if a representative of a trade union were regularly to adopt Standard English as the dialect he used, he would no longer be trusted by those who elected him to office, and whose spokesman he ought to be. But I will venture to contend that it is the right of every one born in these islands, whatever the profession and whatever the property of his parents, to be taught to speak that English dialect which marks an educated man. Nothing can be more disastrous than that the accidents of history, which have led to this dialect of the educated appearing to be a special prerogative of the well-to-do, should be regarded as irretrievable. The democratic spirit must demand for every child, however humble his parents' occupation, that he shall be taught that one common dialect which can be understood everywhere, and which is the modern representative of all that has been greatest in English learning, statesmanship, oratory, poetry, and politeness. All other dialects are local. To unite all who work, whether with body or with mind, in

one fellowship, a common speech must be one necessary instrument, and there is no other dialect which is spoken and is understood so widely as the Standard English dialect.

It is to help, in however humble a measure, towards the propagation of this dialect in all counties and in all classes that I have put together this little book. Doubtless it is incomplete, doubtless many readers will be able to suggest directions in which it needs to be expanded and improved, but the work seemed to be worth attempting. Delay will not make it easier, and therefore I have here written down such thoughts as I have felt might go some way towards securing the desired end.

The art of speaking the Standard English dialect is one that, unlike other arts, does not require a large amount of time to be specially devoted to it. It is an art that can be practised every moment of the day : all that is needed is some knowledge of the points of difference between the Standard dialect and others, some sensitiveness to the distinction of sounds, some alertness to notice the pronunciation and idiom of others and of oneself, and the agility and will to assimilate one's own dialect to that musical and beautiful speech which we may hear at times from the best speakers of Standard English.

Experience shows that, unless attention is precisely fixed on the characteristic features in a spoken language, it is perfectly easy for any one to remain magnificently unconscious of faults and inaccuracies in his way of speaking it. A French settler in England might continue for ever unable to pronounce *t/h*. In the same way, one who has not from infancy heard and used Standard English may long be left in ignorance that his speech is in another English dialect. The difficulties of those who

wish to use Standard English are increased by the fact that in all languages change is continual and continuous, and Standard English is not exempt from this law of change. A hundred years ago the best speakers pronounced *gold* to rhyme with *fooled*. The letter *h* has come to be pronounced in the last fifty years in such words as *herb* and *humble*. Even to-day fine speakers of a generation nearly passed—but they only—omit the aspirate in *hotel*. It is still a moot point whether it should or should not be sounded in *humour*.

This makes it desirable that from time to time the most noteworthy features in the Standard English of the day should be examined, and, if those not born to the dialect are to learn it, that those features should be recorded for their study.

PRONUNCIATION AND SPELLING

It is to be remembered as another cause of difficulty in speaking Standard English that all of us know many more words in these modern days from reading books than we have ever heard pronounced, and this circumstance sometimes results in strange errors. There are many words well known to particular professions, and having therefore an established pronunciation in the Standard dialect, which are only known by sight to other speakers of Standard English. As a consequence it is wise to take pains to learn as far as possible the Standard pronunciation of words which occur in modern books. When this is not done the results are sometimes ludicrous. It is possible to misread a word, to imagine a false pronunciation, and to repeat this perhaps for years, till on

some occasion truth is brought startlingly to one's notice by another person's clashing pronunciation.

Thus, one speaker has been known for years to pronounce *reminiscences* as *rĭ-mennĭ-seens*, simply from misreading the word the first time she met with it, and not recognizing afterwards the true pronunciation, when heard from others, as the equivalent of the written word. Another speaker for many years knew from books a word which he pronounced *aw'-rĭ*, and through conversation a word *ă-ry'*, and yet never identified the two words. Yet a third speaker knew *psychology* in books, but, not mixing with philosophers, imagined that the word was pronounced *pis-col-ogy*. A college friend of the writer's had from the spelling arrived at the notion that *ribald* (which apparently he had never heard pronounced) would rhyme, not with *nibbled*, but with *piebald* (as Browning has actually made it in *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*), and a university graduate now holding a public position of distinction enunciates before a disconcerted audience, none of whom feels equal to the delicate task of enlightening him, *Alley-looley-a*. Others again, having met with the word *automaton* in their reading, and not having heard its pronunciation so as to connect the sounds with the written symbols, instead of making it rhyme with *comma tun*, utter sounds which rhyme with *phaeton* and *Paton*. A whist-player has been known, in complaining to his partner, because the partner's play had made him suppose that he held a hand different from what he really had, to say 'You quite *my-zulled* me', and to maintain that he had often heard this word used and that it was no error for *mised*. This was probably innocent ignorance: it was brazen bounce when the pretentious pedagogue declared for pronouncing *Mac-*

Hinery to rhyme with *finery* but with the middle syllable cut out, and, being confronted with the suggestion that no such Scotch name existed, but that the letters represented sounds rhyming with *greenery* and giving the sense of a collection of machines, asserted that one of his school friends had belonged to the clan in point. Unfamiliarity with the spoken word again explains the pronunciation of *controversy* with the stress on the second syllable instead of a heavy stress on the first with a lighter stress on the third, that is, with the same rhythm as we have in *con'sequences*.

When we have never heard a word pronounced and we see the written symbols which are used to represent it, we are under the necessity of turning those symbols into sound, failing any other clue, by the analogy of some other words which we do know and which are represented by similar symbols. Nothing better exemplifies how precarious this proceeding is than many of our English place-names. It is easy enough to grasp the rule¹ by which *Harwich* rhymes with *carriage*, *Horwich* and *Norwich* with *porridge*, and *Dunwich* with *tonnage*, while *Ipswich*, *Sandwich*, *Northwich*, *Nantwich*, *Middlewich*² have a second syllable sounded like *witch*. But how is a stranger to know that *Chichester* is not *Chy'-chest''er* but *Chĭch'-ester*, that *Alnwick* is *Annik*, *Burgh* not *Bürg* but *Bŭrrŭ*, rhyming with *The Curragh*, and that *Bicester* is a disyllable rhyming with *blister*? In point of fact,

¹ The rule is that if *-wich* is preceded by a single consonantal sound, *w* is silent and the second syllable rhymes with *ridge*. Somewhat similarly *Berwick* and *Lerwick* are severed from *Sandwich*.

² The *-wic* in these Cheshire towns is of different origin from that in the others, and some speakers would have it sounded with the vowel sound of *wight*, but this pronunciation is so rare that it may be regarded perhaps as a piece of preciousness.

since travelling is so common, and masses of the population are transplanted continually to places whose names they mainly glean from their spelling, the true pronunciation of legitimate development is fast perishing and new sounds are arising artificially evoked from the old spelling read by analogy. Thus, *Cirencester* is perhaps more often now called *Sī'-ren-ses''-ter* than *Sīs'-ī-ter*. But *Colne*, so far, has been left to rhyme with *moan*, and it is only the ultra-precise who try with the meticulous primness which mispronounces *forehead* to insert the *h* in *Birmingham*, where it is as silent as in *Durham*. The termination *-ham*, however, has suffered developments which are more legitimate. Speakers of the last generation were careful to say *Loo'-īs-ŭm* for *Lewisham*: false analogy has made the present pronunciation universally *Loo'-īsh-ŭm*. In the same way, although we still may hear *Grānt-m̩* or, better perhaps, *Grāhnt-m̩*, the pronunciation *Grān'-thŭm* is becoming more and more common.

How ignorance of spoken Standard English may lead to mistaken pronunciations growing up from the spelling, may be illustrated from what happened some months back at a Manchester church. The parents said that they wished their daughter to be christened in the name of *Iren* (rhyming with *siren*). They were quite clear and definite that the name was not to be *I-re-ne*. When, after the service, the register was to be written up they declared that the name they had chosen for the child was spelt *Irene*. They had in fact seen the name written, guessed wrongly how it was pronounced, and asked for the name they had newly invented to be given to their child. It is even conceivable that they had some dim recollection in their minds of the name *Eileen*. Through similar ignorance, another name has changed its sound from

what its history would demand. *Doris* is a Greek name, the pronunciation of which was anciently *Door-is*. Any one with a tincture of Greek about him will always hanker after this pronunciation, yet to-day the common pronunciation is *Dör-is*, rhyming with *Morris*. Similarly, any one who has been taught Latin will be inclined to pronounce *florist* to rhyme with *sorest*, but the pronunciation is almost as common which rhymes it with *forest*.

It is precarious, as we have seen, to argue by analogy from the pronunciation of one word represented in spelling by a certain set of symbols to the pronunciation of another word whose spelling suggests a similarity between the two words. To take a simple instance: while *southwards* and *northwards* have sounds fairly reflected by the spelling we inherit for them, *southern* is the established spelling for a word now pronounced *sudʹən*.¹ Some speakers may be heard giving to *northern* an analogous shortening of sounds, so that they pronounce the word *nödʹən*. The Standard speech, however, has never pursued this analogy; educated speakers say *nawdʹən*.

We may illustrate from yet another quarter the way in which the spelling we use became no index of the standard pronunciation, and then again led speakers who only knew the word from the written symbol to give it a different pronunciation. In the time of Elizabeth a *mill* was still known to the clerk who kept the Ecclesiastical Court records of Chester as a *milne*. The sound changed as time went on to that which is represented by the present spelling.² The family name *Milne* preserved the old

¹ For the sound denoted by *ð* see p. 66, and for that denoted by *æ* see p. 34.

² In strictness it should be said that both *mylen* and *myll* are Old English. Their descendants survive, *mill* in Standard English and *miln* in other dialects.

spelling while having the pronunciation *mill*. Many persons unacquainted with the family name have pronounced it in the light of the spelling so as to sound the *n* after the *l*, and this pronunciation has now become common. The history of *kiln* is very similar. The old spelling has in this case been retained throughout. Half a century ago the word was given in spelling-books amongst those which needed to be learnt as having the same sound as some other word, but a different spelling. *Kiln* had the same sound as *kill*. To-day vast numbers of educated people who have no acquaintance with the word except as a written word pronounce it so that the *n* is heard, but it remains that this pronunciation is the pronunciation of ignorance and is not yet accepted by careful speakers as correct.

The hopelessness of trying to associate the present spelling with the present pronunciation, except to a very limited extent, may be illustrated by two examples. The present writer as a small child was put to learn the spelling of certain words by repeating the letters of the single syllables, and then their pronunciation and, finally, the pronunciation of the whole. He could not for some time be brought to repeat to the satisfaction of his teacher 's, a, l, *sal*: m, o, n, *mon*; *sammun*'. Again and again he tried, concluding with '*sal-mun*'. The persistence of the teacher at last compelled him to utter the sounds desired, but his childish mind for years could not grasp the correctness and propriety of what he was forced to say. Indeed, he would now still assert the impropriety of such a method of teaching. That such a method of teaching confuses the child's mind is shown by the following incident. A boy accustomed in his local dialect to speak of a 'turmit' delivered himself to his

master of this in a spelling lesson. 't, u, r, *tur* : n, i, p, *nip* ; *turmit*'. Here the boy failed to get at first the advantage he might have got from learning the spelling of the word, because he had been perverted by the method of teaching, and his expectancy that there should be any connexion between the spelling and the pronunciation had been blunted unintelligently. It cannot be too clearly impressed upon the learner that the pronunciation of the whole word is one thing, its spelling (generally showing Elizabethan pronunciation) is another, and the spelling by syllables if used at all is only for convenience of repetition.

This point is of so much importance that a few more illustrations may well be given. To speak frankly, it is an offence against the rules of modern Standard English to pervert, in consequence of the spelling, the undisputed pronunciation used by refined speakers. *A minute*, whether of the clock or of a Committee Meeting, is to-day properly pronounced to rhyme with *begin it*. Only an entire misconception of what our spelling stands for could lead any one accustomed to Standard English to tamper with this pronunciation. The same sounds are used to-day whether we are referring to a *fisher of the sea* or a *fissure of a rock*, and whether we speak of cutting off all *succour* from a besieged town, or all the *suckers* from a plant.

Two trivial examples may be given of the divergence of the present pronunciation from the spelling which has come down to us from the past. Wilde's 'Ballad of Reading Gaol' shows that *waltz* is now pronounced to rhyme perfectly with *false*, and *clothes* rhymes with *blows*.

It must not be supposed that it is all loss that the spelling we use does not reflect the pronunciation current to-day amongst us. That loss, it is quite true, is serious, and especially so for foreigners and for those who are not from

their earliest years habituated to the Standard English speech. But there is more than an occasional advantage to be derived from our conventional spelling. The speech of to-day uses in certain instances identical sounds for different conceptions. When any one says '*the time (thyme) is late*' it is the context and the circumstances in which the words are uttered which enable the hearer to understand whether *the hour is late* or *the garden herb*. By means of our conventional spelling a reader instantly knows what is meant. Similarly, in writing it is easy to understand what is meant by saying '*this writer deserves candid, not candied, criticism*'; but in speaking, some effort would be required to make another person instantly understand what is meant.¹ If a speaker is momentarily oblivious of the ambiguity which may attach to the sounds he utters, and says his words with that ordinary distinctness—that golden mean between the slovenly and the studied—which is habitual to the Standard dialect, he may express his meaning indeed, but the sound of his words may call up another in the hearer's mind, and the result be an unintended joke. The future bride who begged a group of men to come to her wedding-reception, and when they pleaded their lack of suitable wedding-garments, exclaimed 'Never mind your clothes, it's your presence I want', forgot that *presents* is with difficulty distinguished from *presence*.

We may here appropriately consider a question which has

¹ As some doubt has been expressed whether it is possible in speech to make this distinction, it may be said that the effort would take the form of pronouncing *candid* rapidly as a simple word with a single stress of emphasis, while *candied* would be pronounced markedly as a word with two syllables, each taking some emphasis so that there is the slightest perceptible pause after the first syllable, and the second syllable is more prolonged than the second syllable of *candid*.

been asked sometimes as to whether a final consonant should be ejected, so to speak, with decision and sharply severed from the word following. It is chiefly where the next word begins with a consonant, and especially the same consonant, that the precise speaker or teacher of elocution is most insistent on the propriety of such decided separation. As we shall see, however, *liaisons* between words have been common in Standard English, and, although we shall have occasion to notice that the modern treatment of final *ng* and *r* is not what it was, we must avow that the change has not altered the general character of English speech. With a good speaker we are unconscious of any effort in his elocution: we hear the words clearly, but the musical flow does not distract our attention from the subject-matter; all keeps an even tenor, elegant, refined, crisp, polished, beautiful, so that we are never pulled up to consider or to admire any detail. Keeping this before us as the ideal to pursue, we shall conclude that a final consonant before another—and even before the same consonant—will not ordinarily be emitted with any noticeable parade. We shall speak of *excellent coffee* and even *excellent toffee* without clicking the final *t*, just as we shall speak of *excellent ice* without labouring to prevent the *t* from attaching itself to the following word. Some may desire to distinguish *an excellent ale* from *an excellent tale* by a clear-cut severance between the final *t* and the beginning of the word following, but sufficient distinction is made by pronouncing a long *t* in the second phrase. This example may serve to show the principle which should guide us in all such cases. Where there is risk of confusion, we must sacrifice to clearness the desire for smoothness. To be smooth is then to be slovenly.

As was previously stated, all things linguistic are in a

constant state of flux. Often the other English dialects are of extraordinary interest in exhibiting stages of pronunciations through which the modern Standard English has passed. No doubt partly this may be due to the Court or fashionable or Standard pronunciation gradually and slowly infiltrating into the provinces. A pretty instance of this is supplied by the development of the sounds represented in writing, at the time when printing fixed our English spelling for us, by the letters *oth* in the middle of words. The former pronunciation of this combination has persisted in Ireland to our own time: in Standard English it has passed into *-ŭth*, as e.g. in *mother*, but in one word *bother* the pronunciation even in Standard English agrees with the spelling. The explanation is to be found in the curious fact that the word was imported into England from Ireland about two hundred years ago, and long avoided as an Irishism by careful English speakers.

Perhaps one of the most fascinating lines of study in connexion with the history of the English language is that which traces its sound-changes as illuminated by the survivals in the dialects, in the rhymes of poets, and in derivative words whose formation has been forgotten. The ancient pronunciation of *one* which its spelling exhibits in reflection—it formerly rhymed with *bone*—survives in its derivatives *atone*, *only*, *alone*. When Old Mother Hubbard, it will be remembered, went to fetch her old dog a *bone*, the poor dog had *none*. Another stage is found in the dialect pronunciation rhyming with *on*, *swan*, and *don* which uses the sounds given to the word *wan* in Standard English, while that Standard dialect has lightened this vowel to *wun* as it has in *done* (sounded to-day exactly like *dun*), *some* (just like *sum*),

none (like *nun*), *among*, *tongue*, *won*, where it is distinctive of Standard English to have the *u* sound.

The divorce between the spelling of our English words and their pronunciation is strikingly exemplified by the word *hiccup*, the sound of which has been devised as an echo of the vocal spasm that it denotes. As early as Francis Bacon's *Sylva* (1626) we find the spelling *hic-cough*, obviously intended to suggest by the letters what the origin of the word was thought to be, though there is nothing to show that it was proposed to enforce a new pronunciation.

For Dr. Johnson's astonishing achievement in dictionary-making no admiration can be too great. The more we learn and comprehend the work he did single-handed, the more we are forced to respect and to revere. But some errors of the great lexicographer are now patent. Unfortunately the greatness of his fame made these serious; they overbore later opinion. One such mistake was the choice of *despatch* as the correct spelling of *dispatch*. The reason of the choice, contrary, it should be observed, to Johnson's personal practice, was perhaps the notion that the word was the English form of the French *dépêcher*, whereas it is in fact from the Italian *dispacciare*. But what deserves notice is that the Johnsonian influence on the written form made no pretension to affect the spoken sounds. The unhappy inversion by which the written symbols were studied with a view to mouthing, with a supposed superior precision, a pedantic yet ignorant pronunciation, was reserved for the last century. There is an old word descended by unbroken tradition from the Anglo-French of our Court. Their form of it was represented by the spelling *vitaille*. Learned French writers of the sixteenth century, wishing

to indicate its ultimate Latin¹ origin, introduced a reformed spelling, *victuaille*, which was reflected in English in the form *victual*, a form which no more indicates a change of pronunciation than the substitution of *indict* for *indite*. But the half-educated elegance of the Victorian age could not stomach the egalitarian use of a pronunciation which might be heard on the lips of 'the common people'. So it came about that *vittles* was thought a vulgar way of speaking,² and in Dickens's day a 'common' man's speech was supposed at once to be indicated by writing *vittles* for *victuals*. One elegant minced out the fantastic *vic-tew-uls*—as others said *con-dew-it* for *cun-dit*, and must have shuddered as they swallowed *biscuits* (bis'kits) and *circuit* (sā'kit). If we must force speech and written symbols into harmony, it is clear that we ought rather to repair our spelling. We shall not then have to consider the further problem presented by the universal pronunciation *vittler* when we speak of a 'Licensed Victualler'.

For securing a suitable subtlety of flavouring, it is said that an Indian cook will himself chew an onion and then breathe over the ingredients of the dish he is preparing. He thus imparts an aromatic suspicion delicate enough to be gently delicious, yet not so definite as to be gross. A subjective flavour not less subtle is imparted, some sensitive natures feel, to the sounds of words whose spelling is not objectively voiced. Were *beauty* spelt differently, it would lose, they feel, some of its charm:

¹ It may be noticed that it was Johnson also who ruled as from the Latin throne that *mutual* meant *reciprocal* and not *common*. But since in Latin *mutuus* is used in the sense of *common*, there seems no ground for censuring Dickens for *Our Mutual Friend*.

² John Walker in his *Pronouncing Dictionary* (1818) says: 'No solemnity will allow of pronouncing this word (*victuals*) as it is written.'

the subconscious remembrance of the unsounded vowels wraps the mere audible sounds with an ethereal romanticism, and keys them truly to the sense. For such fine natures we may presume that *beauty* could never rhyme with *duty*—if rhyme is to remain anything intelligible. There must, however, remain a difficulty if this subtle suggestiveness of symbol is to be seriously taken into consideration. How does it come about that the spelling of to-day has this mystical significance? We naturally suspect that it is mere familiarity with it, habit, convention—and in that case equally poignant sentiments would soon attach to another spelling once grown familiar. If it be not mere familiarity that lends the magic air, why, except that it serves to exclude a possible mispronunciation, should *penny* be superior to the *peny* seen in our Prayer Books till a few years ago? Why should *victuals* be better than what went before? ¹

We may view the relation of spelling to speech from another standpoint. It will then appear how distorted is the reflection of the sound as projected into writing. Two children are brought to be christened: the godparents of the first announce his name in what is heard as *Rāfe*, the second as *Ralf*. Afterwards, when the names are to be recorded, both have to be spelt in the same fashion as *Ralph*. (The variety of pronunciation, it will be noticed, is like the differing pronunciations—Scotch and English—of *golf*.)

¹ In truth, it is not in the spoken sound but in the associations of the word that this elusive fragrance resides. To the present writer, the eye of *La Belle Dame sans Merci* should be *grey*, and the ancients of the *Earthly Paradise* were *grey-beards*, but an old man to-day has a *gray* beard. The associations of our accustomed spelling are no less part of our literary heritage than the philological ancestry and company of words. But these delicacies of literary suggestion are not to be intruded into the question of the actual sounds used in pronunciation.

It is this irrelevance of the present spelling to the present pronunciation which turns the flank of all attacks directed on the line of the spelling against any current pronunciation. That most people pronounce *margarine* with a soft *g* in spite of an *a* following in the spelling does not show that they are perverse, but that, if we want to keep the rule about *g* representing a hard sound before an *a*, we must either write *marjarine* or *margerine*. That *ei* represents only in *either* and *neither* the sound heard in *dine* does not show that we ought to say *cether* and *neether*. We may as properly be required to make uniform the sounds represented by *eo* in (1) *people*, (2) *leopard*, *jeopardy*, and *Geoffrey*, and (3) *yeoman*, as to make uniform the sounds represented by *ei* in (1) *either* and *neither*, *sleight* and *hight*, (2) *seize*, *perceive*, *conceive*, *deceive*, and *receive*,¹ and (3) *vein*, *heinous*, *rein*, *seine*, and *weight*.

The coalescence of *o* and *u* sounds before nasal consonants has produced a number of homophones (words having the same sound) in Standard speech, while the dialectal development has been different. Thus, the word represented in writing by *son* has come to be sounded precisely like *sun*, *ton* is like *tun*, and we have the town *Tonbridge* and yet *Tunbridge Wells*. *Won* (and *one*), *done*, and *none* rhyme with *fun*, and *some* sounds just like *sum*. Shakespeare's spelling shows that he said *justle*, not *jostle*, and many call *Runnuk* what is spelt *Ronuk*.

Some words with this *ɪ* sound will be found assembled on pp. 101-2: here we will merely mention two, *London* and

¹ The spelling rule which commands

‘I before E

Except after C’

would seem to assert by implication that it is only in the combination *cei* that *ei* has the sound heard in *seen*.

comfort, the first syllables of which illustrate our point. Some dialects have this change of sound in vogue where the Standard has either abandoned it or never introduced it. Thus Standard English sounds *ɪ* in *constable*, *frontier*, *trouble*, where other dialects do not, but it has the *ɔ* sound as against some other dialects in e.g. *accomplish* and *lorry* (though the frequency of the variant *lurry* shows that neither has paramount claims).

Before we leave this topic, it should be noticed that some dialects have taken over the short *a* sound and so diverge from the Standard in this direction. For *John* they say *Jan*, for *because* (rhyming in the Standard dialect with *was* and *Boz* and the first syllable in *nozzle*) they say *bɪ-kǎz* (rhyming with the first syllable in *dazzle*).

How the date when foreign words entered the language betrays itself in their pronunciation may be demonstrated by a few more instances. There was in ancient Italy a town named Alba, a native of which was denominated *Albanus*, 'a man of Alba'. Here the first syllable was sounded as in *pal*, or, at the extreme, as in *ma*, not *marw*. Hence in Roman history to-day when we speak of the Alban line of kings, we pronounce the first syllable with a short *a* sound, since the word in this use is not domesticated with the entire English people. It has happened, however, as we know, that a Roman soldier of this very name was martyred in this island sixteen hundred years ago, and his name has been treasured through the centuries so that the place of his killing has held true to its godfather though Saxon, Dane, and Norman have successively become its masters. It is therefore no surprise to find that in *St. Albans* and in the family name *Alban* the first syllable has developed its vowel sound on lines parallel to the word *Maundy*:

the name is sounded like *all'-bæn*. In a similar way the word *alter*, long settled amongst us, has developed the same sound of *all* in its first syllable, and with it it has transported its kindred *alternate* into the same category of pronunciation. On the other hand, the rarer and later importation, *altitude*, still keeps its Latin short *a* sound, and the name *Albert*, hardly known in England before the Prince Consort married its Queen, has not yet been subjected to any change but the anglicizing of the *a* from the German sound in *Mann* to that in *man*. It is the same with *albino*, the history of which is comparatively recent.

How poets' rhymes illuminate the history of past sounds may be seen from a little reflection on what are called *sight* rhymes. In reality these rhymes are rhymes which were true rhymes in some former age, and were employed as such by poets of that age. Subsequently, the sounds gradually changing, later poets continued to use them, claiming the right to rhyme them as a 'poetic licence' inherited from their predecessors. When, finally, the sounds were become absolutely distinct, so that by no possibility of pronunciation could it be pretended that they rhymed, 'poetic licence' was invoked to justify the use of *sight* rhymes. Perhaps the most startling example of such false rhymes is Heber's rhyming of *anger* with *danger*; but apart from extreme licence like this, we have innumerable rhymes which are of interest as showing what the old pronunciation of the words was. For instance, a familiar hymn begins

' God moves in a mysterious *way*,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the *sea*'

—or, as the Irish still say, preserving the pronunciation which Cowper knew, the '*say*'. In the same way Byron

rhymes over and over again *star* with *war*—a plain proof how the latter word was once pronounced. These rhymes of the poets, however, do not warrant us in perpetuating the ancient pronunciations, although without them we are conscious that the rhymes are false and only traditional or sight rhymes. This is the reason that the highest authorities in music and poetry now forbid in all circumstances the pronunciation of *wind* to rhyme with *mind* rather than *tinned*, and condemn the misguided perpetuation of the old tradition as an unwarrantable shibboleth for the musical aspirant.

But it is not always that we can gather the old pronunciation from the spelling. It will be remembered that Tennyson wrote that ‘all the world wondered’ while ‘into the valley of Death Rode the six hundred’. In the ‘forties the last word was pronounced as if it were ‘hunderd’—syllables with *r* in them having always had a propensity—as they had also in Greek and Latin—to vary the position of the vowel sound relatively to the consonant. Thus while we say *third*, Lincolnshire is divided into *Trythings* and Yorkshire into *(Th)ridings*.

Occasionally a proper name continues to witness to an old pronunciation. For instance, in the proper name *Sworder* the *w* is still sounded, in *Coke* the vowel is still the short sound heard to-day in *cook*.

One more illustration may be taken to show how a derivative formation, if it loses in popular consciousness its connexion with its parent word, may go to exhibit the old pronunciation of the parent. Those who are intensely conscious that *manifold* is a compound form derived from *many* give to the compound the same vowel sound (*menny*), but most speakers, regarding *manifold* as a word of separate and individual life, continue in it the old

vowel sound which Irish and some English dialects have retained, e. g. in *any* (pronounced like *Annie*), *many* (as *manny*).

An example of how sounds slowly change is to be found in the tragi-comedy now enacting before us in regard to the vowel sound heard in, for instance, *fatc*, *reign*, or *pail*. In one whole district of England, extending from Surrey to Cambridgeshire and with Nottingham as perhaps its most virulent representative, this sound is changing into the *i* heard in *wine*; so that what the rest of England means by *fight*, *Rhine*, and *pile*, is entirely different from what this district means. For the present this change has not penetrated into Standard English. Another change, however, made originally by lazy speakers to get a more easy sound, has effected a quite definite lodgement in modern Standard English. In certain positions the sound of *yew* has been simplified to *oo*. Thus, while the stage until quite lately persisted in speaking of *Syew'zan* (*Susan*), modern English has abandoned the painful attempt and says quite frankly *Soo'-zan*. So, too, in *lute*, the more careful pronunciation is the rarer, and the majority of speakers confuse the word with *loot*. It remains, however, a mark of a good speaker of Standard English that he says quite distinctly *iss'-yewz* (for *issues*), *ə-syewm'* (for *assume*), *prĭ-zyewm'* (*presume*), *rĭ-zyewm* (*resume*), *syewt* (*suit*).

A word which is changing, or rather perhaps has changed, the value of its vowel sound is the common word *room*. Not very long ago, as any dictionary will show, the vowel sound was long, as in *boom* and *doom*. The word *room*, however, occurs so frequently in compounds such as *bath-room*, *bed-room*, *dining-room*, where the stress accent on the first syllable tends to

shorten the vowel in the second part of the compound, that by a reaction apparently, the uncompounded word has come to have the short *ō* sound. Two other words are in danger, from whatever cause, of getting their vowel sound similarly shortened—viz. *soon* and *broom*, but in these the change is hardly yet complete.

The most prominent features that distinguish one dialect from another may perhaps be said to be (1) pronunciation, (2) intonation, (3) grammatical accidence, and (4) grammatical syntax. The second of these can hardly be dealt with intelligibly in print. Viva voce instruction, and failing that, even a gramophone record, may be of service; but the student must observe for himself. The other features of the Standard dialect we will consider in turn.

PRONUNCIATION IN DETAIL

As to pronunciation, we may subdivide what has to be said under three heads—viz. (*a*) vowels, (*b*) consonants, (*c*) stress accent.

§ 1. Vowels.

For our present purpose of putting on record the chief features in modern Standard English, it may be well to begin with the smallest components of speech, and here we must notice that the modern Standard dialect often differs from other dialects both in the quality of its vowels and in certain rules about consonants.

As regards the vowels it must again be insisted that in all languages these are constantly, if slowly, changing, and as a result each dialect of a language is likely to

exhibit, partly from the influence of analogous words and partly from other causes, its own special vowel sounds in particular words. Thus it happens that in words whose spelling shows that in the time of James I they all had an identical vowel sound, Standard English often gives different sounds, while other dialects may give yet others. To-day, for instance, the Standard dialect does not rhyme *but* and *put*, though other dialects do, some giving one sound and some the other. The student will find it worth while to test himself with the lists given on pages 101-2 of words which in modern Standard English rhyme exactly. If in his present speech these words do not provide perfect rhymes, he should practise assiduously with them until they do.

There are in modern English nine simple vowel sounds, though we have fewer single symbols to represent them in writing. Simple descriptions of these vowel sounds follow here with indications of the differences between them and the vowels found in other dialects.

1. Short *ă* (as in *Dan, fan*) is not the short vowel sound corresponding to the long *āh* sound of *father*. In Continental languages and in some English dialects the short *ăh* vowel is the regular sound. The pronunciation of the German *Mann* will illustrate this. Old-fashioned teachers of singing declared that this was more musical since it was the Italian sound, and encouraged their pupils to mispronounce their English words accordingly. The vowel used in Standard English is sharper, and in pronouncing it the tip of the tongue is close to the teeth a little way below the gums, while in the Continental vowel the tongue is close to the soft palate. It is essential for speaking the Standard English dialect to get this vowel clearly. How delicate the sound is may be

seen from considering that *Pall Mall* sounds almost exactly like *pell mell*, that *catsup* is also written *ketchup*, and that *handkerchief* is often pronounced so that it might be represented by *heng'-kə-chif*.

2. Short *ɛ* (as in *den, fen*) may be said to be the shortened form of a long vowel found only under certain very definite conditions in Standard English. The tongue is in the same position as for the short *æ*, but the middle is raised a little. In Standard English the long vowel corresponding to it occurs only before an *r* sound, as in *dare, fair*; Continental languages and some other English dialects have it before other consonants, e. g. it is heard in the second vowel in *élève*.

For most speakers nothing more need be said; for Irish and Scottish speakers one caution must be added. The Irish dialect tends to sublimate *ɛ* into *ĩ*, the Scottish to deaden *ĩ* into *ɛ*. The Scot speaks of his *denner*. The Irishman by his thin pronunciation might validate the verbal play in the old lines which tell how

‘ Poor *Lucinda*
Was burnt to a cinder,
And that was the end of “she”;
For once she was *tender*,
But now she is *tinder*,—
How that poor girl suffered for me!’

It will not be amiss to add here that in a few words where the spelling *ai* or *ay* shows what an older pronunciation was, the Standard dialect has developed a short *ɛ* sound. Thus *says* is the traditional spelling for what we now pronounce *sez*: *saith* and *said* we pronounce *seth* and *sed*: *waistcoat* is heard as *wes-kət*. Till lately *again* rhymed truly with *pen*, but—probably under the unconscious or conscious influence of the spelling—the

majority of those who use the Standard dialect now rhyme it with *pain*, though the dictionaries (which tend to lag behind actualities) still give *agen* as the current pronunciation.

3. Short *ĩ* (as in *din*, *fin*) also is pronounced as shortly and crisply as possible with the tongue still in the same position but raised still more than for *ĩ*, and with the lips still closer. It is not identical with the Continental short *ĩ*, which is the shortened form of the long *ēē* sound, in which the tongue again is closed to the soft palate. (The Scotch *denner* for *dinner* has been referred to above and the reader should also consult pp. 38 and 54.)

4. Short *õ* (as in *don*, *fond*) is pronounced with the tongue tip drawn well back from the teeth and the mouth well open; it will hardly present any difficulty, though it may be wise to say that in Standard English the sound is not approximated as it is in some dialects to short *ã*, e. g. *Fohn* is distinguished from *Fan*, and *because* is pronounced *bikos* (not *bikã*).

5. Short *õõ* (as in *look*, *foot*) causes no difficulty so far as pronunciation is concerned, but, as will be seen below, the Standard English dialect has this sound where some other dialects do not employ it and it is vital to use it in the proper place.

The student may find good material for practice in the word *woman*. The first vowel in this word is sounded in Standard English in such a way that the whole word does not rhyme with *rum* 'un or *summon*, nor *woman-porter* with *rum an' porter*. The Standard pronunciation rhymes with *room an' (dungeon)* if the newer pronunciation of *room*, with a short vowel, be used. For those who have been taught the reformed pronunciation of Latin, it may be useful to say that *hũmandorum* will

give the right vowel sound for the first syllable in *woman*, *door*, *room*. Another word requires no less care. The first vowel sound in *bosom* is identical with that in *gooseberry* and this must be quite clearly made different, as it is, from the sound in *husband* or *bast*, and, on the other hand, from *booze*. The true Standard sound of the vowel is identical with that in *good* or *Boulogne*, as distinct from that in *bud* and *boot*. The Latinist may again be helped if he is told that the vowel in *bush* is the same as in *omnibūs* pronounced with the reformed pronunciation, and that *book* has the same vowel sound as *cūcūmis*, *bucca*, *pūgil*, *nullus*, and *rūdis*.

6. Short *ɪ* (as in *dun*, *fun*) in Standard English is approximately the short vowel corresponding to the long *āh* in *father*, *farther*. Standard English has again this sound in places where other dialects use the short *oʊ*, and it is imperative to master the use in Standard English speech. Lists of words will be found on pages 100, 101 showing the present Standard pronunciation.

7. Closely akin to this *ɪ* sound is one which deserves a special word of comment. To foreigners it often seems the most distinctive vowel sound in the English language. It is less definitely pronounced than the *ɪ* and is often called the indeterminate vowel. It is generally represented in phonetic writing by *ə* (an inverted *e*). It is the sound which in ordinary fluent speech represents most of the unstressed vowels, e.g. in the second syllable of *breakfast* (*brɛk-fəst*) and in the first in *offend*, *attend*, *suppose*.¹ This sound, in point of fact, is often lighter still, for whenever the following consonant is a nasal

¹ This is prettily illustrated by the joke of thirty years back, recently resuscitated by *Punch*, of the letter intended for *the County Surveyor*, but addressed to *the Countess of Ayr*.

or liquid, this indeterminate vowel is merged in the consonant, which becomes what is called sonant, i. e. equivalent to a vowel. Thus *bitten* in modern Standard English is not pronounced *bit-ten* nor *bit-tun*, but *bitŋ* (where *ŋ* is the conventional way of representing this nasal sound which has the hum in the nose sounded by Kaffirs and other South African tribes at the beginning of many of their words). Similarly, *heaven* is not pronounced *hev-un*, as in some other English dialects, but *hevŋ*. In the same way *m* becomes sonant in such words as *fathom*; and *l* in such words as *rattle*. (The sonant *r* of some north-of-England dialects, as in *bitr*, = *bitter* is not found in the Standard speech, which has *bitə*, see p. 48.)

So important is a thorough understanding of this matter that it will be worth while to speak at a little more length upon it. If any one considers attentively the exact sounds he utters when he says *didn't*, he will be likely to wonder how those sounds have come to be uttered to represent *did not*. Whatever the explanation of the development, the point of interest to us here is that the sounds to-day used give us an excellent example of the sonant *n*. It is not the full and articulate *did-dunt* which is said: the second vowel is less definite than what would be so indicated. No air comes through the mouth as there would if the syllable were as fully developed as in *hunt* or *punt*. We rather prison some air in the back nasal passages and make them hum before we bring out the *n* sound. This dull and hollow, half-strangled murmur in the cavern behind the nose followed by the sound *n* is conveniently represented in writing by the symbol *ŋ*. Examples of its occurrence are supplied by *isn't* (pronounced, as we know, *izŋt*), *wasn't* (pronounced *wozŋt*), *mustn't* (*musŋt*), *oughtn't*

(*awtnt*), *orphan* (*awfn*). A similarly muffled hum before the sound *m* is represented by *m̥* and is to be heard in *fathom*, while yet another sound less distinct than a fully formed *n̥* is often heard before *l* and may conveniently be indicated by *l̥*, while the consonant *r* disappears, and there remains no more than the indeterminate vowel sound, which we represent by *ə*. Examples of this are to be found in, e.g., *letter* (pronounced *letə*, not *let-tūr*), *philtre* (*filtə*), *nigher* (*nī-ə*), *fire* (*fī-ə*); *people* (*peep̥l̥*), *settle* (*set̥l̥*). As is fairly obvious from the instances adduced, these sounds occur in unstressed syllables, and this has given the singers and choir-masters of modern times much ground for hesitancy. When the music requires such an unstressed syllable to be prolonged, what is the proper vowel sound to draw out? In most cases many are inclined to answer, Make a sound suggested by the spelling: sing e.g. *Cum-fort ye*, 'garden'. Yet this advice is open to grave criticism. In the first place, it must be kept clearly in mind that Standard speech does not in any way recognize these sounds: the sonants described above are not shortened forms of the vowels indicated by the spelling: the spelling reflects an older pronunciation from which the modern pronunciation has developed, altering and not merely clipping the sound. Hence to translate the spelling into corresponding sounds is to use a pronunciation obsolete so far as Standard English is concerned, to appeal, not to the educated ear of all England, but to a knowledge either of some provincial dialect or of the printed and written word. Again, it may properly be contended that the method thus adopted in some cases results in a flat mis-pronunciation. Thus *furnace* has definitely for its second syllable in Standard English

-*niss*, not -*nace*, and with *palace* and *necklace* the sound -*ace* for -*as* is at least open to criticism, if not to censure. With such a word as *tortoise*, to follow the spelling for any musical excuse whatever would wear the air of confessing ignorance of the Standard sounds.

Further, even those who subscribe to the rule we are questioning do not carry it out to its uniform and logical consequences. Few singers, if any, give us *Lon-don town*, although the second syllable is on all fours with that in *Comfort*, though in the latter case the second vowel, if long drawn out, has a sound which we might represent by the French combination *an*.

The better opinion, then, seems to be that the spelling should be forgotten, and even in singing, though the latter syllable be prolonged or sustained on several notes, *lesson* should be sounded precisely like *lessen*, *fissure* like *fisher*, *succour* like *sucker*, *bridle* like *bridal*, and *pallet* like *palate*. We may notice, moreover, that Tennyson liked to write *landskip*—perhaps to indicate that he preferred a pronunciation somewhat more trochaic than most speakers use for *landscape*—but *lantern* has quite displaced the false spelling *lanthorn*.

This seems a convenient point at which to mention another respect in which Standard English differs from other English dialects. The reader may have observed that our own tongue—like the Flemish—has a final sound other than French has for many words common to both languages. We say *letter*, French *lettre*: for the French *les autres arbres* the Flemish say something like *lā zōter zarber*. It is interesting to find that on the Scotch-English border the dialect spoken often disagrees with the Standard English in this respect. Thus, the Border dialect speaks of *lettrās* and *pattrānz* for

letters and *patterns*. Somewhat similarly a Scotsman speaks of a *Southron*, where Standard English says a *Southern(er)*. A divergence is exhibited in the present pronunciation and spelling of *iron*. One dialect sounded the second syllable here as the Scots say (*South*)*ron* and as we now say (*ap*)*ron*. Another dialect sounded it as we say (*south*)*ern* and as some speakers of the last generation said (*ap*)*ern*. In the Elizabethan age, besides the spelling *iron*, men used *y-erne* to represent another way in which they spoke the word. To-day our pronunciation is descended from the dialect which then said *y-erne*, while our spelling has persisted from the dialect which said *iron*; so that the Standard dialect now makes the vowel element the same as that of *fire*, quasi *ir'n*. How slender the difference is may be illustrated by reminding the reader how William Morris in *The Earthly Paradise* (vol. iv, p. 14, December) rhymes as a monosyllable *nigher* (which has two syllables in the Standard dialect as used normally for prose) with *desire*, and Matthew Arnold went still further and rhymed *fire* as a disyllable with *by her*, only to be censured in consequence for a cockneyism.

It deserves to be noticed that an *r* sound in modern Standard English seldom leaves the preceding vowel what the analogy of other consonants would suggest. Thus, where *bat* has the short *ă* sound, *bar* has the *āh*, and *sirrah*, *virulent*, *stirrup*, and *syrup*, almost alone, have the short *ĭ* sound heard in *silly*. Accordingly we may perhaps distinguish yet another short vowel sound in Standard English, viz. a short *ĕ* before *r*. While the vowel sounds practically remain constant before other consonants, this particular sound seems to be special to the combination, short *ĕr*. The tip of the tongue is not quite so near the teeth in pronouncing *bury* and *berry* as in pronouncing

bet or *Ben*. Generally speaking, however, the vowel sound before *r*, though different from the sound represented by the same letter before other consonants, is identical with some other vowel sound occurring before other letters, e. g. *barrack*, *parrot*, *barrier*, and *marrow*; *sorrow* and *to-morrow*; and *burrow* may be taken to have the same vowel sounds as in *banner*, *sodden*, and *butter*, while *nor* (unlike *not*) gives us the *aw* vowel.

8. Long $\bar{a}h$ (as in *yah*!);

9. Long $\bar{e}e$ (as in *fee*);

10. Long $\bar{o}o$ (as in *fool*, *hoot*) present no difficulty.

11. Long $\bar{a}w$ (as in *saw*). In some dialects, e. g. in south-east Lancashire, there is a tendency to retain for the diphthong *aw* or *au* the old sound $\bar{a}h$. To overcome this inclination and tendency the student should practise until, e. g., the sound he gives to *gnaw* is identical with that which he gives to *nor* before a consonant.

With hardly more than one exception in Standard English the sound has now changed from the old $\bar{a}h$. Fifty or sixty years ago *Taunton* was still prevalently pronounced *Tāhntən*, and survivors of the last generation still speak of *hāhnt* (for *haunt*). In *launch* and *laundry* there is still perhaps room left for both the old and the new pronunciations, but with this reservation the only word still showing the old sound is *aunt*, where the introduction of the new sound *awnt* is at present quite unacceptable. It is this persistence of the older pronunciation which makes it better still to keep the vowel short in *ant* so that it rhymes with *pant* and *cant*, not with *can't*. *Ant* is the same word as *emmet*, and though it is possible that eventually the telescoping of the word into one syllable may produce a long vowel (as it has in *can't* from *cannot*), the present pronunciation

of *aunt* is, for the time being, an obstacle which will probably prevent this development from proceeding further. It is those who have begun to speak of *āhnt* for the insect who at present tend to make the innovation of *awnt*. An instructive illustration of the change may be found in this. The Gospel for the day before Good Friday begins, in Latin, with *Mandātum novum* ('A new commandment give I unto you'). Hence the day is known as Maundy (pronounced formerly almost *Mahndy*) Thursday. The sound has deepened subsequently into *Mawndy*, diverging from the Latin. But when King James I came south to England and said after meeting Sir Walter Raleigh that he liked Raleigh (then often spelt 'Rawley' and pronounced *rāh-ly*) but *rawly*, it is evident that in the dialect he spoke, whether the Standard English of that day or the Scottish, he sounded *aw* as *āh*.

In a few words, it perhaps deserves to be mentioned, modern Standard English gives the *ǒ* sound where the spelling has *au*. Thus, *laurel* rhymes with *sorrel*, *sausage* rhymes with *Gossage*. *Laudanum* has an opening syllable which rhymes with *cod*. So, too, the proper name *Laurence* rhymes with *abhorrence*, and *Maurice* is sounded exactly like *Morris*.

As we have seen, before an *r* sound we get the vowel sound frequently changed in modern Standard English, and as a result we have still to notice two or possibly three long vowel sounds which occur only in this position.

12. Long *ū* sounded like *au* in the French *œuvre* and *sœur*: examples of this sound are to be heard in *burr*, *cur*, *curl*, *fir* and *fur*, *furl*, *her*, *hurl*, *carl*, *myrrh*, *pearl*, *purr*, *sir*, *worse*, *curse*, *hearse*, *whirl*, *whortleberry*, *world*, *bird*, *word*, and *heard*. It may be noticed specially that

this \bar{u} sound is preserved in, e.g., *furry*, *stirring* (pronounced $f\bar{u}-ry$, $st\bar{u}-ring$, while other dialects make the sounds $f\ddot{u}r-ry$, $st\ddot{u}r-ring$), and *erring* (which, pronounced $\bar{u}-ring$, does not rhyme with *herring*). To prevent any misconception, it may be well to say that the long vowel sound in these three words is the same as in *burly*, *sterling*, and *carly*.

Besides these simple vowels there are a number of compound or diphthongal sounds some of which occasionally give trouble, although if the simple vowels from which they are compounded are familiar the difficulty should not be great.

13. \bar{i} as in *mice*, *fine*—a compound of short \check{a} and short \check{i} —is in Standard English pronounced so rapidly that its compound character is often hardly noticed. Some other dialects use a somewhat similar diphthong made up from short $\check{a}h$ (or even $\bar{a}h$) and short \check{i} , but this will seem harsh and crude if substituted for the Standard sound.

14. Long \bar{a} or *ai* as in *Dane*, *dale*, *fain*, *feign*, *face* is a compound of \check{e} and \check{i} . Some dialects use merely a lengthened \bar{e} , a pure vowel sound, found also on the Continent, e.g. in French *père*, *reine*. This again is a sound not known to Standard English, which only employs the diphthong with the single exception noted on p. 3.

15. Long \bar{o} as in *dome*, *dose*, *fold*, *foam*, *own*, and, we may note specially, in *gross*, in Standard English is a compound of a pure *o* vowel lengthened, with an \ddot{o} added: the Standard dialect never employs a pure vowel, as Continental languages and some other English dialects do. This diphthong is found shortened in some cases (e.g. in the final syllables of *pillow*, *tobacco*) under the

influence of the stress accent which, as we shall see later, comes into play in the pronunciation of words of more than one syllable.

16. The diphthong heard in, e. g., *dew, due, few, new, you*, is a compound of ɪ and oo and presents no difficulty except that, as has been already mentioned, the development of the language is tending to change this sound, at any rate in certain words.

17. The diphthong *oi* as in *boy, noise, toys* is to-day rather the compound of aw and ɪ than of ɔ and ɪ as it was early in the last century. Some dialects other than the Standard make the sound that of $\text{aw} + \text{ɪ}$: otherwise it presents no difficulty.

18. Long ou (as in *foul, doubt, down*), a compound of ɔ and oo , needs attention on the part of those who have become accustomed to the vowel sounds in such an English dialect as is spoken between Derby and Kent or in the Eastern States of America. The nose passage is left open in Standard English, with the result that the nasal timbre heard in those other dialects is avoided. Moreover, while in Lancashire the sound is that of $\text{ah} + \text{oo}$, and in one London dialect that of $\text{ɛ} + \text{ɔ} + \text{oo}$, the Standard dialect has its own distinct and musical value for the diphthong, and this almost more than any other characteristic gives it its melodiousness.

It must be noticed that before *r*, changes take place which, at any rate in two instances, produce diphthongs additional to those already enumerated, viz.:

19. Long ee before an *r* (as in *beer, mere, year*) combines into a sound which most of the best speakers of Standard English produce in a form which may be most nearly represented by $\text{ɪ}'\text{-ə}$. Now it is possible for a diphthong such as this to assume two different forms:

it may retain its original accentuation on the first element, or it may shift the stress on to the second element, so that the first element becomes a consonant, i.e. $\check{r}'a$ becomes $y\bar{a}$. In this way *merely*, for example, becomes *my\bar{a}'li*, and *ear* and *year* tend to be reduced under one pronunciation, $y\bar{a}$; in fact, in the mouths of the younger generation the two words are becoming identical, and it is not uncommon to hear 'He that hath $y\bar{a}z$ to $hy\bar{a}$, let him $hy\bar{a}$ '.

20. Long \bar{o} before *r* has similarly changed in modern Standard English into what is really a diphthong. Some speakers, indeed, have allowed the change to go so far that they pronounce *poor* as *paʊr*. The majority of good speakers, however, do not consciously do this, and believe themselves to aim rather at such a sound as would be represented by $p\check{o}\check{o}-a$, though it must be confessed that often the truer symbols would be $p\check{o}\check{o}-\check{a}h$. So *rural* is often hardly distinguished from *raʊ-ral*. If this pronunciation finally ousts the $\check{o}\check{o}-a$ pronunciation, this diphthong will become again a simple long vowel.

It may be added that practically every vowel sound is so affected by a following *r* as to require attention.

(a) Long \bar{i} tends to approximate to $\bar{a}h$. This means that the proper \check{a} and \check{r} almost fuse into one sound in which the short \check{r} has disappeared. But a careful speaker will avoid letting *spire* merge into *spar*.

(b) Long \bar{a} or $\bar{a}i$ ceases to be a diphthong and in this position, and this position only, gives us the true long vowel sound corresponding to short \check{r} —thus *pair* gives us the vowel sound heard in the French *père*.

(c) Long \bar{o} approximates more and more nearly to *aw*, and although careful speakers still attempt to distinguish the two sounds, a very large number of hearers are

unable to recognize the distinction they attempt to make—thus *Nore* is in a fair way to become identical with *nor* or *gnawer* (pronounced rapidly). If the distinction is still appreciable, and a good speaker should certainly aim at making it so, we may say that *court*, *core*, *door*, *boar*, *mourn*, *bourn*, *worn*, *bore*, *floor*, *four*, *fore*, *gore*, *sore*, *more*, *pour*, *borne*, *torn*, *pore*, *store*, *port*, *pork*, *force*, *course*, and *yore* have still the long *ō* sound, while *born*, *corn*, *morn*, *horn*, *horse* have the *aw* sound. But it remains, in point of fact, that the careless speakers of Standard English are more and more coming to make *poor*, *pore*, *pour*, and *parwer* indistinguishable, except through the sense of the context.

(d) The long vowel heard in *new* tends to become (as might be expected from what has already been said about *ōō*) a sound which may be represented by *ĩ-āw̄*. Thus *your* has grown nearly, if not quite, identical with *yorc*; *sure* grows more and more like *shore*; and even, perhaps, *lured* grows like *lord*.

(e) Long *ou* again tends to become long *āh*, so that with some speakers *bars*, *baths*, and *bowers* are hardly distinguishable. Such extreme confusion, however, must be regarded as slovenly, though the majority of good speakers certainly fuse more or less decisively the short *ōō* with the vocalic relic of the following *r*, and this has the effect of giving a long *āh* sound instead of the diphthong *ou* heard before other consonants.

In one or two words the vowel sounds deserve detached comment:

(1) There is an apocryphal story which relates that when Dr. Johnson was asked in the eighteenth century whether *nīther* or *nēether* was the correct pronunciation, the sturdy old Conservative roundly replied, 'Nayther'. To-day the first pronunciation is certainly the most

common amongst those of the younger generation. It is sometimes said that there is no other example in the English language of the *i* sound being represented by the letters *ei*, but, as will be gathered from all that has been said already, this argument is of no validity as against actual custom, and, moreover, in the words *height* and *sleight-of-hand* we have what may serve as parallels to the spelling *ei* with the sound long *i*.

(2) *Real* is distinguishable from *reel* not only by having the sound of two syllables but also by the quality of its first vowel. The same sounds are heard in the last two syllables of *ideal*, and in *agreeable*. In all three words, as pronounced by speakers of the Standard dialect, the succeeding vowel affects the sound of the *e*, which in preparation for what is to follow is slurred and muffled from the vibrant keenness given to it, e. g., in the Irish dialect. An Irishman seems to say *reel-y* for *really*.

(3) Another example may be given of how change still continues. Many words which now have the sound of long *ī* in Standard English, at a former stage of their development had the sound heard in *air*. Some dialects to-day pronounce *early*, e. g., *airly*; and some speakers still use this sound for the first syllable in *peradventure*. The word *girl* is still pronounced *gairl* by some good speakers, though their numbers are continually decreasing. The corruptions *gel* and *gal* testify to the prevalence of this pronunciation a century ago. To-day, undoubtedly, the vast majority make the word rhyme with *earl*.

(4) Modern Standard English does not always give the same vowel sounds to a common root as it appears in a single word and in a compound. For example, the pronunciation of *know* is by no means a guide to the pronunciation of the first syllable in *knowledge*. The modern pronuncia-

tion has brought this to be an absolute rhyme to *college*, and in a similar way has made *holiday* no longer sound like *holy day* but has brought the first two syllables to rhyme with *Polly*.

(5) There are cases in which some little latitude of pronunciation exists. Southern speakers of Standard English lengthen certain vowels which Northern speakers shorten, e.g. Southern speakers pronounce *often* precisely like *orphan*, and distinguish the vowels in *off* (*awf*) and *of* (*öv*). As regards this, the only inflexible rule amongst speakers of Standard English is that no vowels may be lengthened except before certain definite consonantal sounds. Thus, while Southern speakers lengthen the vowel in *dance*, *cough*, *salt*, and words like them, Standard English rejects any attempt to lengthen the vowel in *gas*, *stamp*, *moss*, *toffee*, *sausage* (pronounced *soss'ij*), and words of similar form; but *garvn* (= *gone*) is not uncommon, *cawfee* survives with some old-fashioned speakers, and *mahss* for *mass* is common amongst Roman Catholics. In truth, whether the vowel sound is the long *āh* or the short *ǎ* is a matter in which again change is continually and gradually taking place. There are some words in which the change and conflict of pronunciation are evident to-day. In nearly every case it is possible to give a reason why one pronunciation or another is preferred. *Lăther*, e.g., is perhaps used rather by those who have not always shaved themselves but have heard hairdressers make it rhyme with *gather*. Generally speaking, here, as in other things, the tendency is for speakers unfamiliar with some particular word to pronounce it on the analogy of other words whose pronunciation they know. It is impossible to discuss the matter in all its details. The student who is desirous, as he should be, to speak Standard English

should observe the pronunciation others give to any word he does not know intimately, and any pronunciations which a speaker, who is plainly a polished speaker of Standard English, may use that differs from his own. Besides this a student should test from time to time with a dictionary, such as the Concise Oxford Dictionary, whether his pronunciation of words conforms to the current usage. One or two general remarks may, however, be made here: (1) The long *āh* sound is used before the consonantal sounds represented in the following words, *clasp* (*rasp*, &c., but perhaps not *asp*, and certainly never *aspic*); *task* (*ask*, &c.); *laugh* (*quaff*, &c.); *aft* (*after*, *laughter*, &c.); *class* (*pass*, *grass*, &c., but not *mass* and *gas*, and perhaps not *ass* or *lass*); *mast*; *dance* (but perhaps not *askance* or *enhance*). (2) The short vowel *ă* is used before the consonantal sounds represented in the following words, *amble*; *pant*; *act*, *snack*, *lamp* (*stamp*, &c.). Where, however, *mp* is followed by sonant *l*, we have the long vowel *āh*, as e.g. in *example*, *sample*.

§ 2. Consonants.

Generally speaking, the consonants in the various English dialects are identical: a few only require comment.

1. One consonant which requires notice is that indicated in ordinary English spelling by *ng*, though for distinctness philologists often write *ŋ* to represent this sound, which is a single sound just as truly as *m* and *n*. When the symbol occurs, however, in the middle of a word it generally represents not this simple sound but this sound followed by a *g*: e.g. *anger* is the way of writing sounds really pronounced *aŋ-gə*, and the same combination of sounds is heard in *language* and *languid* and also *languor* (pronounced *laŋ-gə*). Formerly, whenever this *ng* sound

occurred at the end of a word and was followed by a vowel sound, English speech made a liaison so that a *g* sound was added: e. g. *hang it* was pronounced *han-git*. In some dialects this liaison still survives, but Standard English now never inserts it and begins the next word quite cleanly with the vowel and ends the previous word with the single nasal consonant. Thus to-day *among us* no longer rhymes with *fungus*. It should be added that where an *ng* at the end of a verb becomes medial by the addition of a suffix, the *ng* retains its single sound without any *g* sound following: e. g. in *singing* and *singer* there is a single sound, but *younger* is pronounced *yŭŋ-gə*, since it is an adjectival formation.

2. It seems likely that a similar development of another sound will before long be completed. In the middle of words, *r* between two vowels is trilled as in *terror, horror, arrow, berry* and *bury, Mary*. Similarly, at the end of words before a following vowel probably the majority of those who speak Standard English still trill the *r*: e. g. *for us* (pronounced *faw-rus*), *bar it* (pronounced *bah-rit*). But certainly a considerable proportion of those who speak modern English well now avoid this liaison and begin the second word with the plain vowel, pronouncing the final *r* of the previous word as if it came before a consonant. They say, e. g., *faw-us* and *bah-it*. Before a consonant, modern Standard English does not trill *r* at all, and the student should pay particular attention to this rule. It will be desirable to discuss the matter more fully. But before we do this, a few illustrations may help better than any attempts to formulate rules. *Neither skin nor bones* will have the sounds of *gnaw bones*, since before the consonant *b* the *r* will be silent as a consonant. Before a vowel an extreme instance may perhaps

help to show how the newer pronunciation works. The words represented as 'here you are' are pronounced 'hē-ə-yō-wāh' or 'hē-ə-yōō-wāh', not 'hē-e-yāh'.

Two hundred years ago the combination of sounds represented in Elizabethan times by the spelling *er* developed into what might be better represented by *ar*. As a result *clerk*, e. g., came to be sounded *clark* and, as we know, that sound has permanently recorded itself in the spelling of the proper names *Clark* and *Clarke*.¹ So far as Standard English is concerned, this sound is still used in *Derby*, *Hertford*, *Berkshire* and *Berks*, and *sergeant*. As we have seen in other directions, the spelling here also frequently affects those who have not known the Standard dialect pronunciation of these names or words: they are tempted to take the spelling as a guide to the sound.

It is a curious circumstance that the lisp by which *lʃ* is said for *s* appears to have been unknown to the Greeks and Romans, as it is also to other nations than our own to-day. But the Greeks and Romans fell into such halting speech only in another respect, in which strangely enough the Chinese resemble them. The Chinaman cannot compass the English *r* when it stands unheralded by another consonant: *wely glad* he says for *very glad*. So the Athenian laughed when Alcibiades for *κόραξ* (*kōrax*), 'crow', could only say *κόλαξ* (*kōlax*), 'toady'. Even within the bounds of Standard English itself there are several ways in which *r* is produced: the tongue twists differently as we utter the words *rot* and *rat* and *writ*. Other English dialects know yet other

¹ The Irish dialect, as so often, keeps the memory of this stage of development: it pronounces *certain* as *sartin*. Some speakers tend similarly to-day to substitute *āh* for *ə* as the second element in the diphthongs heard in, e. g., *poor* and *mere*.

fashions of producing what is recognized to be the sound *r*. A Somersetshire man aspirates the sound at the beginning of a word, as when he speaks of the great drains in the Bridgwater district as *rhines*. It would appear that the tribes from whom the Romans learnt the names of the *Rhine* (*Rhenus*) and *Rhone* (*Rhodanus*) similarly aspirated to the Roman ear the initial *r*. In the same way an Athenian aspirated every *r* at the beginning of a word, for in other positions he sounded it so lightly that with a little laxity it became *l*. Modern Standard English has some interesting parallels to this. To-day *balm* and *barm*, *alms* and *arms*, are sounded the same, the *l* and the *r* alike being no more than vestiges of an earlier pronunciation embedded in the spelling we still use. *Calm* rhymes with *charm*, *carve* with *halve*, and *calves* and *salves* with *carves* and *scarves*. So again, *stork* is indistinguishable, as speakers of Standard English utter it to-day, from *stalk*, while very few even know that there are two distinct words—*corker* and *caulker*—in modern metaphorical argot—much less are they conscious of the difference in either sound or sense. Similarly *walk* rhymes with *York*, and both with *hawk*.

This brings us to a point of considerable interest and importance. The writer can recall a discussion in which for nearly a quarter of an hour one speaker of Standard English endeavoured by iteration and emphasis to make clear to three others a difference which he supposed himself to make between the sounds he used for *fir* and *fur*. The others were at least as sensitive as the speaker to subtleties of tone and timbre, yet to the end their verdict was that the sounds the speaker uttered were so indistinguishable as to be identical. The reader will remember that no speaker can reproduce (as a gramophone can)

exactly the same sounds twice running without the possibility of slight variation, and that thus identity of sounds from a speaker means such close conformity to an average norm which he uses that others recognize the sounds as, in intention, identical. May we then say that the normal sound given by speakers of Standard English to-day to the word *morn* is such as to rhyme with *dawn*? Experiment amongst such speakers has shown the writer that so far as the sounds are concerned (apart from voice-inflexions attuned to the sense) there is no distinction now between, e. g., *do not chew fish nor meat* and *do not chew fish: gnaw meat*. We may reasonably infer that *dawn* rhymes with *born* (though not with *borne*) and *bought* with *wart* and *short* (though not with *port*), *daughter* with *mortar* (not with *porter*) and *Maud* with *lord* (not with *board*). If it be felt that to allow such rhymes is to make the poet's art too easy, we may offer compensation by urging that all rhymes which are now mere sight-rhymes indefensible by a late clinging to a moribund pronunciation should be abandoned. Let *launch*, since the older generation still pronounces it so, for a little longer be tolerated as a rhyme to *branch*; but let *war* no more be invited to rhyme with *bar*, for no one has heard them truly rhyme for many years in the Standard dialect. One group of words may be specially mentioned: *love*, *dove*, *prove*, *above* formerly had the same vowel sound—a short *ō*. This might be heard not so very long ago in the pronunciation of *love* on the stage by many traditionalist actors, and in the Scottish dialect *Not proven* is pronounced to rhyme with *woven* or the Staffordshire village of *Coven*. The old pronunciation of the Derbyshire river *Dove* is not yet dead which rhymes it with *cove*, *rove*, and *Hove*, but, apart from these survivals which testify that till lately

poets might fairly invoke a not yet extinct pronunciation to justify them, cannot be adduced to countenance the pretension that *love* can rhyme to-day with anything but *dove*, *above*, *glove*, and *shove*, or *prove* with anything but *move* and *groove*.

Seventy years ago Oliver Wendell Holmes, in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, poked kindly fun at the pathetic endeavours after polished pronunciation made by the landlady's daughter. Cut off from opportunities of hearing Standard English speech, she set out to improve and refine upon the speech she heard about her, by extracting, as she supposed, the value of the separate syllables. While others pronounced *parent* in the usual way, she primly said *pay-rent*—it is easy to see why. The moral is twofold: not only does the story again illustrate the danger and preposterousness of working to the present pronunciation from the present spelling, but it may serve as a peg on which to hang the lesson, that in modern Standard English an *r* following affects the quality of a preceding vowel—that is to say, the vowel sound represented by any letter is of different quality when it precedes an *r* from that which is represented by the same letter when an *r* does not follow. A few examples will make this clearer. The vowels in the following pairs of words are of different quality, *pale* and *pare* (or *Maisie* and *Mary*); *beef* and *beer*; *file* and *fire*; *pole* and *pore*; *spool* and *spoor*; *assume* and *assure*; *cull* and *cur*. Only in the following circumstances is the vowel sound before *r* and before another consonant of the same quality: (1) the sound represented by the letters *aw*, e. g. *wall* and *war*; (2) the sound represented by *ah*, e. g. *calm* and *car*; (3) when in the middle of a word the old pronunciation persists by which the *r* is duplicated

and has a liaison, e.g. *Hal* and *Harry* (or *caddy* and *carry*); *bell* and *berry*; *spill* and *spirit*; *folly* and *forest*; *dull* and *Durham*.

It will be observed that these rules can be summarized by saying that all long vowels except *aw* and *ah* change their quality before an *r*, but short vowels do not; and only polysyllables of some antiquity have the short vowel sound at all.

It should be noticed further that whether the newer pronunciation by which a final *r* develops no liaison before a following vowel is adopted or not, the quality of the vowel before the *r* is now never changed. In the last century, after the present pronunciation had become established of, e.g., *stir* as *stē*, many speakers continued to make *stirring* retain the old vowel sound and pronounced it *stŭrring*—the same vowel sound as in *Durham*. Even now one may occasionally hear *furry* mistakenly pronounced to rhyme with *hurry*, though the Standard speech has now settled down to either *fū-rj* or even *fū-y*. In the same way the standard pronunciation gives to, e.g., *war against* the sounds *waw əgainst* or *waw rəgainst*. The Standard dialect does not change the vowel before *r* because of the following vowel and make the sound, as some dialects persist in doing, *wōrrəgainst*, making the combination sound as in *sorrow*.

One or two other examples will serve to show what the rule in modern Standard speech is in this matter of leaving the final sounds of a word unaffected by the addition of suffixes, which are so movable that the forms in which they are used are manifest compounds or inflexions and not individual words permanently self-subsisting. The word *crochet*, which is pronounced *crō-shay* or *crō-shŭ*, makes for its present participle *crocheting*,

so far as spelling is concerned: the sounds used are *crō-shay-ing* or *crō-shī-ing*. Similarly, *ricochet* has most usually for its present participle what is pronounced *rick-o-shay-ing*, though in this word some speakers sound the *t* in the verb itself, and therefore in the participle.

The same principle that the suffixes *-ing*, *-ed*, and *-er* do not change the consonantal sounds at the end of the word as it is without the suffix, may be illustrated by comparing *plumb*, *plumber* with *condemn*, *condemned*, and, by contrast, *condemnation*. And again, *sing*, *singing*, *singer* by contrast with *strong*, *stronger*; *young*, *younger*; *long*, *longer*; in which adjective formations we have the sound *ng-g*.

The working of the rule can be seen again if we compare, e. g., the sounds used in the words *deter*, *deterrent*, and *detering*. Here in the verb the Standard vowel sound for the second syllable is that which is heard in *fur* or *sir*. In *deterrent* we have the sound used also in *ferry* and *ferret*. In *detering*—because *-ing* is one of the suffixes contemplated in our rule—the vowel sound of the simple verb is retained, and the word is pronounced *dī-tā-ring* or even *dī-tā-ing*. It is just the same with *transferring*, *occurring*, *erring*, *abhorring*, *demurring*, in all of which the vowel sound is to be contrasted with what is used in *herring*, *occurrent*, *abhorrent* or the legal term *demurrer*—as a consciously compound word, meaning ‘one who demurred’, it would be subject to our rule. A somewhat similar contrast may be seen between *barring* and *barrier*, *furry* and *furrier*, *warring* and *warrior*—the last word giving us the sound heard in *warren* and *sorry*. On the other hand, the middle vowel sound in *succouring* follows naturally, according to the principle we have laid down, from the verb *succour*. An example of a compound

not springing from a verb may be supplied by *starry*, if we contrast its sounds with those in *Harry* or *marry*.

It may perhaps be said with advantage, since other dialects in this respect have not kept pace with the changes in Standard English, that *spirit* does not rhyme with *ferret*, but has for its first vowel sound what is heard in *spill* and *spin it*.

More than two hundred and fifty years ago Bishop Cosin wrote :

‘ Praise to Thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit’ (then pronounced *sperrit*).

A proportion sum will define the change : as *spell it* is to *spill it*, so is the old pronunciation to the modern. The pronunciation used by modern Standard English is heard exactly in *irritate*.

The sound we associate with *er* in such words as *merry* and *perry*, in *American* and *peril*, is not always heard, as is well known, in some other dialects. The American calls himself an *Amurrican*, and some parts of England speak of *purril*. While in the Standard dialect the change of sound has proceeded in the way that has been shown, in these other dialects the changes have either been arrested or continued on other lines. Speakers who have been accustomed to such dialects should therefore give particular study to the Standard sounds in such words as *pearl* and other words similar to those which have been mentioned.

The contrast between the newer vowel sound *gurl* and the older *gairl* may be seen again in the treatment often accorded to another word. Readers to whom *peradventure* is purely a book-word, unknown to them in ordinary speech, may sometimes be heard to give to the first syllable the older sound, which the reformed pronun-

ciation of Latin rightly gives to the preposition in Latin. In modern Standard English, however, the preposition is universally sounded like the first part of *pearl*, and *perhaps* and *peradventure* have the same opening sound which rhymes precisely with *her*. The opening syllables of *perry* and *peril* may serve by way of contrast and warning to guide the student away from the old to the new pronunciation.

A few examples more may be given for practice and study: Lewis Carroll made the Gryphon say the Tortoise had his name because he 'taught us'. *Yorker* rhymes with *hawker*. Many speakers, as we have seen, still believe that they make a distinction of sound between the vowel in such words as *short* and, on the other hand, *fort* and *port*, though it is not certain whether an unbiassed hearer can detect it. Similarly, no difference can sometimes be detected in the sounds in *mourn*, *morn*, *lawn*, and *Vaughan*, although as has been said good speakers try to discriminate the first from the rest. In the same way it is doubtful whether *sure*, *shore*, and *shaw* are not pronounced the same by many speakers, and possibly *pour*, *pawer*, and *poor*. While these confusions are to be deprecated, we may be satisfied for a 'Dorcas meeting' to be called in joke, because of resemblance in sound, a 'Talkers' meeting'. Curiously enough, some English dialects avoid a liaison between two words where the former ends with *t*, and, more than this, slur the simple sound of *t* between two syllables to such an extent as to make it mute to any one unfamiliar with these dialects. In Oxfordshire and in parts of Lancashire and of Scotland this usage is in vogue: *butter* is called *bu'-ur*, and one boy tells another to *shu'-up*. So far as concerns our present purpose, it is noteworthy that most of these

English dialects disagree with the Standard dialect not simply and singly in sounding *t* with robust resonance, while it has grown slender or silent in Standard speech, but more comprehensively, in choosing *t* instead of *r* to be thus muffled and made mute.

3. Some speakers find a difficulty in pronouncing the combination of sounds represented by *ngth* and some dialects speak of *lenth*, *strenth*. The student should not be satisfied until he gets a quite clear *ng* sound instead of *n* before the *th*. It may be added that the dialects which differ in this respect from Standard English very often assimilate the word *height* to *depth*, *length*, and *breadth*, and use the form *high-t-th*. The Standard form, on the other hand, rhymes with *night*.

4. The present English spelling which represents, as is generally considered, the pronunciation of King James I's time, does not reflect in another direction the present pronunciation. *S* and *z* are inextricably interchanged. Generally speaking, however, this causes no particular trouble since the sounds are the same in all the English dialects except those of Somerset and Dorset, which slur all *s* sounds into *z*. But there is a tendency in some dialects to dull down to *z* the older *s* sound in *us* and it is to be noticed that Standard English refuses at present to adopt this change. *Us* and *bus* are carefully distinguished from *Uz* and *buzz*. On the other hand, a similar blurring of sound from *f* to *v* has entirely ousted the *f* sound in all combinations of *of*, e.g. *thereof*, *whereof*.

The letter *x* has come to represent in English two different sounds, viz. *ks* and *gz*. In some words the Standard speech has one of these sounds, while some of the other dialects have the other. The rule in the Standard dialect is that, when the word has not long been

adopted into English, or where the *x* is followed by other consonants, or where the syllable on which the stress accent of a word falls ends with *x*, the sound is *ks*, where the stressed syllable falls later, the sound is *gz*: thus we have the sound *ks* in *excommunicate*, *excite*, *extract*, *extraordinary*, since a consonant follows *x*. We have the same sound in *exile*, where the accent falls on the first syllable, and in the words of more modern importation, *exotic*, *exude*. We have the sound *gz* in *exact*, *example*, and *exhaust*, *exhort*, since the written aspirate for this purpose does not count as a consonant.

5. A small point which may deserve mention is that the *t* in the combination *ft*, when the sonant *n* follows the *t*, in Standard English is silent: thus, *oft*, *soft* sound the *t*, but *often* and *soften* do not.

A linguistic law, like a law of physical science, is a compendious summary of observed facts. It tells us what the majority of speakers do or have done at some particular period. If it records some change which has taken place in language it is to be understood that there was an inclination or tendency or fashion amongst speakers to change the sounds they uttered, first in some words and then in more, until the change became general or universal. There are in English to-day a number of words where such a law of change has banished the sound of *t* where formerly it came between *s* and *l*. Formerly, as the spelling indicates, *nestle* was pronounced in a way that may be roughly indicated by the spelling *nest-ly*. After the final syllable was changed so that there was no vowel sounded after the *l*, the *l* became sonant as in *bottle*. This change made the pronunciation of *t* difficult, if not impossible unless the sonant *l* was further changed into a distinct and separate syllable, as if it were represented

by -əl.¹ The result is that to-day in Standard English it is a law of pronunciation that in such collocations *t* is omitted and the *l* is sonant without the sound being prolonged into a distinct and fully developed syllable. Accordingly, *wrestle*, *epistle*, *Apostle*, *nestle* are all pronounced with merely a sonant *l* at the end, just as *heaven* in Standard English is not pronounced, as in some other English dialects, *hev-un*, but almost as a single syllable. An interesting example of the rule just given was supplied a few years ago when the word *pestle* was suddenly put upon the lips of many speakers who before had only known it as a written word. Those who used pestles—e. g. chemists and cooks—had obeyed the law of change and had quite properly abandoned the sounding of the *t*. When Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* was revived, thousands of speakers invented a new and nondescript pronunciation, constructing out of the spelling what may be called a ghost-word in the shape of *pēs-təl*. The pith of the matter may be gauged by considering that to sound the *t* in *bustle* is as serious an impropriety as to re-galvanize to life the *c* in *muscle*. *Bustle* and *muscle* it must be recognized now give a perfect rhyme. Another word which exemplifies the same law of change is *forecastle*, pronounced not merely by seamen but by educated speakers of Standard English, whose normal speech is not perverted by any *a priori* dogma that the present spelling reflects the present sound, as *fō-csəl* or *fō'-kə-səl*, and this pronunciation is reflected in the alternative spelling *fo'c'sle*. It may be pointed out

¹ Nevertheless where there has been a different past history of the sounds, the *t* is still sounded. Thus *Bristol* is not confused with *bristle*; *pistol* and *crystal* do not rhyme with *whistle*; nor *hostel*, in spite of *ostler*, with *apostle*. The reader may be invited to consider the surname *Osler* in connexion with this. It shows how the sounds have developed in the English language and that *hostel* was an alien, naturalized later.

that this word well illustrates the law stated elsewhere on page 71, that the stress on one syllable in an English word reduces the vowel sounds in the other syllables.

There are a few words in which a nice question arises as to the sounds to-day in certain words whose spelling has the letters *ch*. Speakers who allow their knowledge of the history of these words to guide their pronunciation are inclined to utter the sounds *sh*, when the word has been imported into the modern English language from French in comparatively recent times. Where the word introduced from Anglo-French has for centuries been on the lips of native English speakers they are inclined to use the sound *tsh*: a good example of the latter class of word is *chivalry*, which such speakers make to begin with the same consonantal sounds as *church*. The poet Campbell in his 'Hohenlinden' shows that he so pronounced it, for he writes, 'Charge with all thy chivalry'—plainly intending a vigorous alliteration. A few such old Anglo-French words may be mentioned, *chafe*, *chain*, *chair*, *chalice*, *chalk*, *challenge*, *chamber*, *champion*, *chance*, *chancel*, *change*, *channel*, *chant*: of French words taken in in modern times may be mentioned *chagrin*, *chaise*, *chalet*. In one word certainly, *branch*, and perhaps in *lunch* also, modern speakers have come to make the final sound *sh* and not *tsh*, although the history of *branch* would suggest that it should have the *tsh* sound, since it came from Anglo-French.

Before leaving the subject it may be worth while to point out that *arch* is pronounced so as to rhyme with *march* whenever it is used to form a compound, e. g. *archbishop*, *archdeacon*, with one single exception, viz. *archangel*, in which the letters *ch* represent the sound *k*. This sound is used when the *arch-* is not detachable from

the rest of the word, i. e. when the word is not a compound. Thus we have the sound *ark* at the beginning of *archaeology*, *archaic*, *archetype*, *archipelago*, *archive*.

§ 3. Miscellaneous Observations.

Words of foreign origin raise special problems. Older generations would seem, in the main, to have thought of anglicizing such words, and frankly did so as soon as possible. Thus we have *Jeremy the Prophet* in the Authorized Version, *hurricane*, and so on. Later generations grew more self-conscious when they had to take over a word, especially a foreign name, and tried to represent more precisely the native sounds, or rather in some instances we should perhaps say to reproduce the native spelling. Thus *Czar* (historically a good derivative from *Caesar*) has been replaced by *Tsar*. For a special reason, *Serbia* has during the Great War displaced *Servia*. So again, what was once written *Punjaub* now appears as *Panjab*. Such French names as *Calais*, *Lyons*, *Boulogne*, and *Rheims* have in varying degrees lost their older English pronunciation inherited from the Anglo-French spoken by our forefathers when Edward III or Henry VI ruled subjects on the other side of the Channel: but the pronunciation reflected in Marlowe's *Calice* is not dead; *Lyons* is perhaps less and less pronounced as if it were *lions*; *Boulogne*, it is true, was made to sound like *boo-long* in the Irish comic song 'Killaloe', and perhaps the majority of speakers now make the last syllable rhyme with *groan*, but a sufficient number of refined speakers still make it rhyme with *groin* to warrant for the present the continued use of this pronunciation. As for *Rheims* (in the sixteenth century *Rhemes*), when the jackdaw immortalized in the

Ingoldsby Legends is mentioned, the city will probably for a long time to come be called *reams*, rhyming with *seems*; as a place that has been ravaged by the Germans, it generally gets the pronunciation given to it in modern French. *Paris* alone still keeps unquestioned its old Anglo-French pronunciation with the final *s* sounded.

How the date at which a foreign word has come into the English language may affect its pronunciation can be well seen by contrasting two words in everyday use. The *potato* was introduced in the time of King James I, and its middle vowel has changed its value from *ah* to its present sound concurrently with the host of other words in which that change has taken place. *Tomato*, on the other hand, still preserves the sounds of the Spanish and Mexican words for it. Still more curious is the history of the pronunciation given to the word *Amen*. Introduced centuries ago through the ecclesiastical Latin from Aramaic, it originally was sounded as *ăh-main*, the accent on the first syllable tending more and more to lengthen the first vowel and to shorten the second. As in *potato*, *dahlia*, *halfpenny* and a host of other words, including biblical names, e. g. *Abraham*, *David*, *Jacob*, the quality of the *a* gradually changed until the word had sounds rhyming with *same men* or the English pronunciation of the Latin *tamen*. This was so narrowly peculiar to the English tongue—perhaps we may say even to the Standard English tongue alone—that intercourse with Continental Christians, coupled with the tendency just described, to endeavour after a more correct pronunciation of foreign words, restored the old vowel sound to the first syllable so that in Standard English it now rhymes with *psalm*. Many choir-masters train their choirs to say also *Ah-braham*, and on occasion one may hear *Dah-vid*

and the like. Once, it is said, at an Oxford College the worshippers were mystified by hearing, in the lessons for the day, of a host of worthies with names previously unknown to them. Inquiry elicited the fact that the scholar whose duty it was to read at that service had got from his father, the Regius Professor of Hebrew, the correct Hebrew sounds for the different names. For names which have become what may be called household words amongst us it seems pedantic to carry to this extent an inclination to aim at scholarly exactness of pronunciation. The advice of a great scholar, perhaps of all Englishmen the one whose judgement has been most soundly sane, is worth recording. Asked whether one should say *Alexandrĭa* (with the stress on the last syllable but two) or *Alexandrĭa* (the accent on the last syllable but one), he replied : ‘ Sir, Dr. Parr and I should say *Alexandrĭa*, since it is strictly correct ; but you like other people had better say *Alexandrĭa*.’

The prevalence in all Secondary Schools and in most Public Schools of the reformed Latin pronunciation is having indirect effects of great interest. When boys are confronted by some proper name which they have not heard, they no longer pronounce it as if it were an English word, but give to the vowels their Latin value. In another generation this will very likely have affected many words whose pronunciation to-day is entirely anglicized.

The question has sometimes been asked whether any general law underlies the vagaries of the vowel sound represented by the symbol *a* after *qu*. The answer is that since our spelling became fixed the developments of the vowel sound after *qu* have proceeded on the same lines as after *w*. Thus :

1. Before *c*, *k* (not followed by *e*), *g*, it has the short

sound heard in *man*. Examples are : *quack*, *quagmire*, *whack*, *wag*. (The same sound occurs in such words as *loquacity*, *tenacity*.)

2. Before *d*, *t*, *l*, *n*, *r*, *sh*, *mp* the short *o* sound heard in *not* : e.g. *quadrangle*, *quadrant*, *squat*,¹ *quality*, *quantum*, *quantity*, *quarrel*, *quash*, *wad*, *waddle*, *what*, *Wat*, *Watson*, *Walt*,² *want*, *warrant*, *wan*, *swan*, *wash*, *swamp*.

3. Before *f* the *āh* sound heard in *laugh* : e.g. *quaff*, *waft*.

4. Before *v*, *k*, *th* followed by *e*, the *ā* sound of *lane* : e.g. *quake*, *quaver*, *wake*, *waver*, *swathe*.

There is a ridiculous story of a reader, whose knowledge was somewhat circumscribed, astonishing his audience by making the prophet Nathan tell King David of a man who had one *ee-wee* (for *ewe*) lamb. This is doubtless apocryphal, but the practice in English spelling of having final *e* in certain words where it is as purely a rudimentary survival as the appendix in humanity does undoubtedly occasion some perplexities. In St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans he sends a greeting to a man Urban (spelt in the Authorized Version *Urbane*). The Oxford college of Magdalen and the Cambridge of Magdalene are dedicated to the same saint and their names are sounded in the same way (= Maudlin). The final *e* in Magdalene is not, as is sometimes supposed, taken from the Greek feminine form and therefore to be sounded: it is a superfluous adjunct. So, too, the past tense of *sit* is in old English Bibles written sometimes as *sate*, but

¹ The same sound occurs in *quaternion*, but it is there reduced by the stress emphasis on the second syllable.

² That the vowel sound has grown into *aw* in *Walter*, *wall*, and *squall* is due to the additional consonants; in *wart*, *quart*, *swart*, *sward*, *swarm*, *swarthy*, it is in part due to the following *r*. For *swath* we may say *swath* or *swawth*.

*satest*¹ should nevertheless be pronounced to rhyme not with *latest* but with *fattest*. Once more, the past of *bid* is *bade* (the spelling so kept perhaps to avoid confusion with the adjective *bad*), but it should rhyme with *had*, and *badest* with *saddest*.

One other curiosity of speech should here be mentioned. As early as the fourteenth century the combination *eng* began to develop into the sound *ing*: *England* and *English* are still so pronounced; *engine* fifty years ago was sounded *injin*. While the latter word has reverted to a pronunciation more readily suggested by its spelling, only a sprinkling of the inhabitants have turned their back on the pronunciation which has descended to us for our country's name.

Three other words present interesting features. The general tendency of English pronunciation would make us expect that in *absurd* and *absorb*, since the stress falls on the second syllable, the *s* following *b* would dull down to a *z* sound. Perhaps it has been the continual refreshment of so many speakers of the Standard dialect at the original Latin source which has defeated this tendency and preserved in the Standard speech the sharp *s* sound. On the other hand, in *absolve*, in spite of the cognate *absolution* (where the different stress accent naturally keeps the *s* sound secure from change), the *z* sound is still the more common, though some purists have set out to revive the *s*. It is conceivable that the reason why Latin has not in this case fortified the *s* against invasion may be that the pronunciation in ecclesiastical Latin has succumbed likewise to the encroaching *z*, and thus the Latin influence has been itself equivocal.

¹ Of course, the present of the verb *to sate*, meaning *to satisfy*, does rhyme with *latest*.

One of the deficiencies in our English spelling is revealed by our use of the symbols *th*. Besides what may be called their proper duty of representing the sound of *t* followed by *h* as in *fat-head*, *Great-heart*, they have from very early times served as an indivisible symbol to represent two simple sounds for which phoneticians use the characters þ and ð, taken from the Anglo-Saxon alphabet. The second of these symbols (which is in form a crossed *d*) has long been disused; the first survived to modern times under the form of *y* (with which þ came to be confused) in *y^e* for *the*. The symbols are now allotted in phonetic writing, the þ to the sound in *hath*, and the crossed *d* to the sound in *father*. Using these symbols, we may then notice that we have in the words in the first column the sound of þ, and in the second of ð:

<i>Gath, hath</i>	<i>gather, fathom</i>
<i>bath</i>	<i>bathe, swathe</i>
<i>lath</i>	<i>lather, lathe</i>
<i>path</i>	<i>Mather</i>
<i>rath</i>	<i>rather</i>
<i>wrath, swath</i>	<i>swarthy</i>
<i>Beth, Bethel, Seth, saith</i>	<i>seethe, tether</i>
<i>death, faith</i>	<i>feather</i>
<i>Ethel</i>	<i>together</i>
<i>heath, hearth</i>	<i>heather</i>
<i>neath</i>	<i>nether</i>
<i>teeth</i>	<i>teethe</i>
<i>wreath</i>	<i>wreathe</i>
<i>loth, oath, wroth</i>	<i>loathe</i>
<i>moth</i>	<i>other, pother, mother</i>
<i>sooth, tooth</i>	<i>soothe, booth</i>

truth, youth, quoth
uncouth

youths
leather

and so on.

The reader will doubtless have detected for himself that the δ sound has developed when *cr* or sonant *u* follows, while the sound is that of *p* if it ends a word or sonant *l* follows. What, however, makes it desirable to mention the matter at all is that a further rule of development may be expressed by saying that the addition of the plural suffix *s*—sounding now as *z*—leads to *p* becoming δ after a long vowel. Thus *bath* gives *ba δ s*, *path pa δ s*, *truth tru δ s*, *youth you δ s*. An interesting exception in appearance is *maths*—the schoolboy's abbreviation for *mathematics*. But in reality, since it has a short vowel, it does not fall within the scope of our law and is no exception to it.

Two small matters may be noted here :

(1) To-day convenience asks that we should distinguish in writing the present participle of the verbs *to bath* and *to bathe*, viz. *bathing* and *batheing*.

(2) To-day the preposition *with* is sounded as *wi δ* , but the other sound is heard in the noun and verb *with* (or *withe*), and it has been asked whether it may not be the verb, not the preposition, that occurs in Milton's lines :

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
 To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
 Were it not better done, as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or *with* the tangles of Neaera's hair?

A few words perhaps deserve special mention because it so often happens through inattention that either their precise form is not noticed or it is not recognized that the

Standard pronunciation of to-day is different from what it once was :

(1) *Casualty*, with its four syllables, is of a different form from such words as *speciality*.

(2) *Wrath* is a noun pronounced *rawth*, while *wroth* is a somewhat archaic adjective meaning *wrathful*, and pronounced by more careful speakers to rhyme with *both*.

(3) In *heinous* the first syllable rhymes with *rein*, not with *dean* or *dine*.

(4) *Diphthong* and *diphtheria* begin with the sound *dif*, not *dip*.

(5) One word has passed through so interesting a succession of changes that it deserves a few words of special comment. *Vase* came into the language from Latin by way of French. In both Latin and French the vowel sound was that of *ah*. When that change of vowel sound took place in England and the United States by which *ah* became *ai* (*Amen*, as we have seen, became *āi-men*, and Sam Weller said *ray-ther*), *vase* changed its sound so that it rhymed with *lace* or *ways*. This pronunciation established itself in the United States, where it is still used. In England, contact with French speech seems to have kept alive or restored the original pronunciation, so that when English speakers made that shifting of sound by which *ah* grew into *aw*, *vase* suffered this change and became pronounced so as to rhyme with *cause*. Once again, however, contact with French speakers kept alive or restored the original vowel sound, and speakers of Standard English to-day say, like their forefathers, *vahz*, so that the word rhymes with *mammas*.

In many and perhaps all languages it is a rule that the sound of a short vowel changes into a long if there is what may be called a telescoping of syllables after it or

a reduction of two sounds into one. Thus in Greek the nominative *πούς* has developed a long vowel sound out of an older *πόδς*, and in Latin *pēs* represents an older *pēdς*. Similarly, *shall not* in English has changed into *shan't*, where the vowel has now a long sound of *a*/*h*; *can't* with the same long vowel sound has, according to rule, grown out of *cannot*, and is thus distinguishable from *cant*. Another example of such contraction is furnished by the word *ant*. This, the form now in regular use, has arisen from the telescoping of the Anglo-Saxon *ǣmete*, a kindred form to which, *ēmete*, has produced the uncontracted form *emmet*, now dialectal. But the compensatory lengthening for the abbreviation of syllables has not taken place, having been, it may be conjectured, checked by the desire to preserve a distinction between the vowel sounds in *ant* and *aunt*. There is another contraction which has often been so misunderstood that those who used it have been haunted by a suspicion that they were allowing themselves to employ a false grammatical form. *Aren't we* and *isn't he* are obvious and correct abbreviations, but the correctness of an abbreviation of *am not I* has been questioned. The truth is, however, that this phrase has been quite correctly reduced to *a'n't I*, where the sound of the first syllable is that of *a*/*h*. The mistake has often been made of writing the sounds with the symbols *aren't I*, and it has been supposed that by false analogy the correct reduction made in *aren't we*, *aren't you*, *aren't they* had been introduced for the first person singular. The reader will see that, while such false analogy might perhaps be legitimately criticized, there is no valid objection to the contraction *a'n't*, which is according to rule. Formerly *ain't* was used by many speakers in conversation, but since only a few of the older generation

now employ it, we need not discuss the validity of the sound change which produced it.

It was perhaps eight years ago that the writer had his attention called to the fact that his own pronunciation of *advertise*, which he continued from childhood with inattention, was at variance with another speaker's. Recourse to the Oxford English Dictionary revealed the interesting fact that thirty years ago good speakers put the stress on the last syllable—an echo of the fact that the word had been imported from the French—but that in business circles it had become usual to anglicize the word completely by putting the accent on the first syllable. Instantly it was clear that the writer's pronunciation was of the last generation, and that, as usual, unless some special cause intervenes, the popular pronunciation¹ of native English tendency had ousted the other. Nothing could better illustrate not only the law of continual change to which all language is subject, but also the necessity of alertness if any one desires to keep pace with such change. It may be added that the Irish dialect has carried the accent only half back as yet, and by stressing the middle syllable disagrees with the Standard.

Somewhat similar is the story of the word *fanatic*. Starting with an accent on the middle syllable due to its Latin original, it tended to be pronounced, as many have pronounced it, *fan'atic*, with the stress on the first syllable. In its case, however, its cognates *fanatical* and *fanaticism* have pulled against the tendency, and so far it has retained on the lips of most speakers its original accent on the middle syllable.

The Irish dialect has obeyed the regular English rule

¹ So Tennyson's pronunciation of *contemplate* (*In Memoriam*) and Rogers's of *revenue* have given way to a stress on the first syllable.

of accent in stressing the first syllable in *finance*—now a thoroughly anglicized word. But for the Standard dialect *financier* and *financial* have kept in countenance the older pronunciation, and so in Standard English the word still has its accent on the last syllable.

There is a subordinate law of accent which deserves more attention than it has sometimes received in recent times. Where both a verb and a substantive or adjective have identical written disyllabic forms, it will be found that the verb takes the emphatic stress on the second syllable, and the noun or adjective on the first. Thus the verbs *permit'*, *extract'* are only in writing identical with the nouns *per'mit*, *ex'tract*, and it is still to-day desirable to say *subject'* and *retail'* for the verb (*subjected* and *retailer* have kept the pronunciation alive) and *sub'ject* and *re'tail* for the noun. Other examples are *contrast*, *conduct*, and *concert*. In the case of *perfect* the pronunciation which emphasizes the second syllable for the verb is seldom heard, and it is the same with *comment* and *detail*. With *commune* other dialects retain the distinction, which seems to deserve to be revived in all these words.

Two or three points deserve special attention since they distinguish the Standard English dialect from many of the others:

(1) It is hardly too much to say that in nearly ¹ every word of more than one syllable all the vowels except those on which the principal stress accent falls are now sounded either as *ə* or as *i* in *fit*, and this however the word is spelt: thus, *furnace* is now pronounced exactly like *fur'niss*; *conqueror* precisely like *coŋk'-ər-ə*; *confounded* like *cŋ-found'-id*; *circumstances* like *sūr'-kəm-*

¹ *Maniac* may still count as an exception—the last syllable has not yet quite ceased to rhyme with *back*.

stæn-siz.¹ In particular it should be noticed that where this *æ* sound would come before nasal consonants the vowels really disappear, at any rate after dentals, and the nasal becomes a sonant, e. g. *kitten* is pronounced *kit-ŋ*. Students from the Northern Counties need particularly to notice that initial syllables are not separately pronounced as they are marked sometimes for pointing in chanting the psalms. Standard English does not say *con'-clusion* but *cŋ-cloo'-zhən*. A few other examples may be given. *Company* is pronounced *kŷm'-pən-y*; *subaltern*, *sub'-əl-tən* or better still *sub'-l-tŋ*. *Registrar* and *bursar* in Standard English have in their last syllables much the same sound as in *sir*. As has been said, wherever the *ɪ* sound has developed in modern Standard English, the truth is really that, whenever possible, the following consonant becomes sonant rather than that there is a full and distinct *ɪ* and a separate syllable. Thus *didn't* is pronounced *did'-nt*, *heaven* is pronounced *hev'ŋ*. (Indeed, in this last word the *n* is hardly sonant even, but the Standard pronunciation makes one syllable of the whole word, ending with two consonants. So *seven* is pronounced *sevn*, and *eleven*, *elevn*. *Elm*, again, is not sounded *cllŷm*, nor *umbrella* as *um-bŷr-ella*, or *overwhelm* so as to end with *wellum*, and to rhyme with *vellum*.) Some dialects do not agree with the Standard dialect in this respect and the matter therefore deserves attention. In particular it should be added that the Irish and Devonshire dialects have developed the *ɪ* sound in certain combinations where English has the *ɪ*. Thus in *hit it*

¹ Some speakers seem to have let themselves be influenced by Gilbert's rhyming of this word with *chances* and *dances*, without observing that such rhymes no more pretend to guide us to the Standard pronunciation than the rhyme with *folly* suggests that we should remove the emphasis from the first syllable in *melancholy*.

(which is to all intents a single composite word), while Standard English has the *i* sound twice, the Irish has *hit'ut*, and similarly the Devonian will say *did üt*.

It may be well further to illustrate the law by which one syllable in a word or phrase is treated in modern English as a sort of pivot round which other syllables hang in dull and almost dumb suspense—or, to use another metaphor, forms a mountain peak which makes all the syllables round it sink to a seeming level of muffled indistinctness. Anciently the space of two weeks was described as a *fourteen-night*: the action of the law in question has clipped this down finally to a *fort-night*. One department of medicine is still known in writing as *midwifery*, but in the best speech of to-day it is still called, according to this law of pronunciation, *mīd' (w)ifrj*.¹ So, too, *housewife*, although it has, through falling out of common use, reverted to a pronunciation (*house-wife*) based upon conscious recollection of its formation and spelling, yet in one sense still retains its old pronunciation of *hūzz'if* when it means 'a case for needles and thread'. *Chamois*, again, when we speak of the animal is pronounced *shām-wah*, but in *chamois-leather* as *shammy-*, rhyming with *Sammy*. In these examples, and in others to be mentioned presently, the overwhelming emphasis given to the principal syllable slurs the other sounds into something which could certainly never be guessed by attempting to translate the letters of the spelling into corresponding sounds. Similarly *medicine* loses its middle vowel through the violence of the emphasis on the first syllable, and its third syllable is dulled down to that sonant *n* which has been before described. So it is again with *venison*;

¹ The *w* is silent with most speakers, but not with all.

and *interesting* is hardly a quadrisyllable any longer, and in any case has such an emphasis on the first syllable that the following vowels, except the last, have the vague sound heard in the second syllable of *murder*. Again, in such a common word as *mountain* the Standard dialect does not utter the sounds *moun-tāne*, but, with great emphasis on the first syllable, *moun-tĭn*. Examples of this law are indeed endless: it will be sufficient to give a few more which happen to present some special features of interest. There is in English a suffix *-ward* or *-wards* which occurs in a number of common words, e. g. *homewards*, *backwards* and *forwards*, *southward*, *outwards*, *inwards*. In all cases this suffix is an enclitic—that is, an unemphatic syllable which leans upon the syllable that precedes it, and that preceding syllable takes all the emphasis and stress of pronunciation. A century or more ago this emphasis had, in accordance with the law we are considering, gone so far as to make the *w* disappear in some cases, just as we have seen it disappear in *midwifery* and *housewife*. The old adjective *froward* is still pronounced without any audible *w*, but this word is now hardly heard except when it is read out from the Bible. Its twin-brothers *toward* and *towards* are, of course, in constant use, and although good speakers still pronounce these words as monosyllables without the *w* sound and so as to rhyme with *horde(s)*, there are many speakers to-day who use pronunciations removed at various intervals from this. At the other pole comes the pronunciation which makes the second syllable take the emphasis, as is required in the second of the following lines of a well-known hymn:

Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?

This law of emphasis, making pivots or peaks, as we have said, of some syllables, and reducing others to muffled silence or murmuring, holds also in another direction. It makes the syllables mere murmurs before the stress just as much as those that follow. Some Northern dialects glaringly diverge from the Standard speech in this respect. The explanation has been hazarded that the chanting of the psalms in church and, in fact, singing in general has encouraged this divergence. Those who have not had much intercourse with speakers of Standard English have taken their pronunciation from what they have heard choirs and public singers use, and in many cases these have, in their singing, followed principles which are irreconcilable with the rules of modern Standard English speech. While choirs recite 'Let me never be *con*-founded' and 'Seraphim *con*-tinually do cry', it is inevitable that the same pronunciation should be regarded as justifiable in ordinary talk. It cannot, however, be too clearly stated that modern Standard English slurs all such opening syllables so as to hurry on to the emphatic main stress of the word.

One caution must be added. The Welsh dialect at any rate has a tendency to err in a direction opposite to that followed in Lancashire. The Standard English rule is that compound words which are still consciously compounds have two centres of stress; the Welsh dialect has in some cases antedated the passing of a compound into a simple word—i. e. has felt it to be no longer a compound and given it one emphatic stress, while Standard English has still given the word two. Thus English speakers say *post office* with two stresses, the primary on *post*, the secondary on *off*; the Welsh dialect makes the first syllable *post* take all the emphasis, slurring the rest of the word into *aff-iss*.

A pretty instance which will show how the development proceeds in Standard English can be easily supplied. Till quite recently speakers of the older generations persisted in referring contemptuously to the *bi-cŷcle* and *tri-cŷcle* with two distinct centres of stress. At least one survivor continued this pronunciation till his death ten years ago, though all the younger generation speak of the *bī-cŷ-cl̥*, rhyming the first part of the word with *spicy*. Before leaving the subject, we may note some other examples. *Inside out* becomes with many good speakers practically *in-sŷ-dout*, *upside down* becomes *upsŷ-down*, *halfpenny* is *hāp-nŷ*, *twopence* is *tup̥p̥nce*, *threepence* is *threpp̥nce*.

The aspirate has rules of its own which require considerable attention. Under the influence of Norman-French, the Court very much ignored the aspirate which was retained by the native English speakers. Early spellings such as *abit*, *erb*, *eretic*, *ostel*, *ymne*, are sure indications of the original pronunciation of words derived from French, which in their Latin form carried the aspirate; and as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century no *h* was sounded in *herb*, *hospital*, *humble*, *humour* and their derivatives. But the general revival of the etymological *h*, which had taken place much earlier, continued its work of restoring the aspiration, and there are now fewer words than there were even sixty years ago in which the *h* is always silent, *heir*, *heiress*, *hour*, *hourly*, *honest*, and *honour* and their compounds alone remaining *h*-less (but *honorarium*, since it is not a derivative of *honour*, now sometimes receives the aspirate, though not with the majority of speakers). Unfortunately, when we have said all this, the principal difficulty with the aspirate still remains. It is true that it is pronounced with a decided effort of

expiration when the word comes in an emphatic place in a sentence, but good English speech, like all other good speech, has beats of rhythm, with some words emphasized and others clipped, slurred, or enclitic to the emphatic words. The way that the aspirate is treated at the beginning of such slurred words is distinctive of modern Standard English:

(a) In slow and deliberate speech such as we hear on the Stage or in public speeches, and in clear reading such as we should hear in church, the aspirate in these enclitics is never silent, though it is pronounced with the least possible expenditure of breath that will allow it to be heard. A marked expiration invariably suggests that the speaker is not at home with the Standard English manner of treating the aspirate; and it is necessary that a student who detects himself expending much effort on such unemphatic aspirates should practise himself by reading aloud until he can make these aspirated enclitics clearly subordinate to the words to which they adhere. Thus, in *his head is large, his feet are small*, the aspirate in *his* is each time lightly sounded, while that in *head* is stressed. On the other hand, *his feet are small, but mine are large*, the aspirate in the emphatic *his* is pronounced decidedly. While in *any man who comes* the aspirate will be light, in *whoever comes* and still more in the Biblical *whosoever*, it will be vigorous.

(b) In rapid speech and ordinary conversation, where all the words group through the rhythm-stress into phrases with emphatic words surrounded by clipped and unemphatic, this lightening of the aspirate in enclitic words is carried a step further. Grammarians have pointed out that modern Standard English has two personal pronouns for the third person—one emphatic with an

aspirate, the other enclitic without an aspirate. Thus in *James hit me, so I hit him* we have the emphatic aspirate pronoun, but in *I couldn't stop him in any other way, so I tripped him up* we have twice over the enclitic unaspirated 'im. At the beginning of a sentence these unemphatic aspirates are never absolutely silent, but in the middle of sentences in rapid speech they are caught into the train of the emphatic word before them or after them to which they naturally attach, and lose their aspirate, e. g. *That's what he* (pronounced *wotty*) *told me*, and *This terrible news shook her fortitude*, where *shook her* has the same sounds as *sugar* except for the substitution of *k* for *g*.

The former tendency to drop (as measured by our modern standard) the aspirate in English showed itself further in the way that it was ignored in the middle of a compound word, and the results of the change in the treatment of the aspirate are here again very interesting. Down to a not very distant date the treatment, which French influence had established, led to the aspirate not being sounded. This was true not only of words historically derived from Latin words such as *exhaust*, *exhort*, but of English compounds such as *blockhead*, *hothouse*, *greenhouse*, *hedgehog*, *forehead*. With the revival and restoration of the aspirate to its original English or Teutonic value, the majority of these words recovered the sound of the aspirate. Thus it is now only in the Welsh dialect that *blockhead* is pronounced *block'ed*. A few words, however, had become too well established in their pronunciation for the aspirate to be revived, and thus it is that *forehead* is pronounced precisely as if written *forrid*, rhyming with *horrid*; *exhaust* is pronounced *ig-zawst*; *exhort*, *ig-zawt*; *exhibit*, *ig-zibit*.

On the other hand, *hedgehog* has in the last fifty years quite recovered the aspirate in the middle of the word; *abhor* is, in Standard English, pronounced *ab-haw* not *a-baw*; and *adhere* is *ad-herc*, although in other dialects than the Standard, the old Court pronunciation still persists (the Dialect Dictionary, e.g., records the Welsh pronunciation of *decrhound* under the spelling of *drowned*), and even to-day the elimination of the aspirate in the middle of a compound word which familiarity has converted into a simple word can be well exemplified by the word *perhaps*. The word is no longer felt to be a compound formation like the archaic *peradventure* of the Authorized Version.

A few miscellaneous words may be mentioned in which Standard English puts the stress of pronunciation on a different syllable from that which is emphasized by some other dialects: *orchestra*, with the stress on the first syllable, is pronounced according to the English rule, although *orchestral* is perhaps on the second. The verb *to commune* (p. 71) has largely succumbed to the same tendency, although some speakers still distinguish the noun—as in *The Commune of Paris*—from the verb by giving the emphasis in the verb to the second syllable. This distinction by the accent stress between verb and noun may still perhaps be said to be in use in *detail*, *retail*, *subject*, and is certainly in use in *protest*, *refuse*, *desert*. In each of these cases the verb thus represented in spelling is pronounced with the emphasis on the second syllable. In *perfect* the distinction has almost lapsed—in *exile* it has quite lapsed—and probably most speakers now pronounce the verb also with the accent on the first syllable: *finance*, as we have seen, retains the stress on the last syllable.

ACCIDENCE AND SYNTAX

As regards Accidence and Syntax, the rules given in all English grammars are, of course, the rules of the Standard dialect, so that there should be little need to say anything here.

Standard English, as was said at the beginning, has been established in its primacy through this cause amongst others, that the great writers of English prose and verse have, at least in general intention, used it as their vehicle of self-expression. Our grammarians have framed their rules largely from the usages of these writers. At the same time they have aimed at imposing from the analogies of other tongues—Greek, Latin, French—certain restrictions on the employment of some combinations natural to English thoughtless speech. Some of the restrictions formulated by grammarians of past generations were undoubtedly bred of an inclination to treat Latin grammar as an absolute science like geometry. English uses, therefore, which were at variance with what were thought absolute and universal laws of language were condemned as ungrammatical or as, at any rate, rude and inelegant. Thus, to take an example from rhetorical rather than formal syntax, because Latin will not end a sentence with a preposition, it was pronounced improper in English writing which was not familiar in style to end with what the grammarian called an English preposition. He did not observe that while Latin forms a compound verb by prefixing to a simple verb a preposition, the English method of formation is by appending to the simple verb what is, honestly regarded, an in-

separable post-position or affix. Once this is understood, our categories of grammatical ordinance are modified: a sentence may end as properly in English with a verb attended by its train of inevitable suffix, i. e. compounded with a post-position, as in Latin with a verb compounded with a preposition.

In this and other instances the English grammarians of the past were betrayed into enunciating some rules repugnant to the genius of the language. Yet, when we have recognized this, we have to remember that there are a number of details of usage where the grammarian may legitimately demand our obedience. All of us have so much of the mimic in us that we embrace words, idioms, and grammatical usages of dialects other than those 'wherein we were born'. The grammarian sets before us a norm, an ideal of refined Standard English, as he knows it or conceives it. His conception gives us no absolute truth; it is not in every detail identical with that of any other speaker of the Standard dialect; it may be misguided here, prejudiced there, alloyed in a third direction with some other dialect; but yet in its broad outlines it pictures for us a relatively perfect standard to which the bulk of educated English people desire to conform, whether they are writing or speaking.

We may ask for a canon by which we can try whether our grammarian is right in his statement of the normal use or has followed some individual fancy. Such a canon may be found in this, that the grammarian must be supported in his rule by the facts and practice of several English dialects. Failing this, we may well suspect that some preconception derived from abstract grammar or from the analogies of other tongues has distorted his judgement, making him veer from the straight path of

deducing his rules from the actual facts of Standard English speech.

With this canon to guide us, we may touch on a few topics which are from time to time discussed in the province of English grammar. Those masters of our Standard English tongue who gave us the Authorized Version of the Bible wrote in one place 'Let us make a covenant, I and thou' (Gen. xxxi. 44). The Committee which revised this between 1870 and 1885 left this unchanged, and rightly. Probably no educated speaker of any English dialect whatever would here say 'me and thee', and it is our grammarian's business to construct a rule which shall cover this fact of English grammatical usage. Since we read again in Gen. xxiv. 14 'Let the same be she', we may guess that, though the older English forms 'Make we a covenant', 'Be the same she', were felt by the translators to be obsolete, they left their impress on the construction. The same explanation may be given of the construction in '*He* that hath ears to hear, let him hear', where, however, we can hardly conceive of *him* being substituted. These examples, it is possible to suppose, are vitiated by the influence of the syntax in the original languages from which the Bible is translated, and we may therefore pass on with advantage to uses more strictly native.

The English interrogative *who*, as we are all aware, is growing more and more restricted to that form and to *whose*. We say 'From whom did it come?' and feel that we are talking with such prim precision that our talk is stiffly studied. With our intimates, unless our natures are reserved and cold, we say 'Who did it come from?', 'Who did you see?' It may fairly be said that whether they realized it or not, the Revisers of the New

Testament were influenced by this fact of modern general usage when they wrote 'Who (for the Authorized Version 'Whom') do men say that I am?' True, they would have said they were correcting an ungrammatical turn in the old translation, but we can securely say that an English grammar uncontaminated with abstract principles must have formulated a rule which covered the use—several times repeated—in the Authorized Version, and further that, had not modern usage made 'Who' at the beginning of a question always acceptable, no pedant would have had the audacity to make the change.

In cases like this everything points to the conclusion that written prose, where there is necessarily an opportunity to review at leisure the composition of sentences and their grammatical structure, employs, as poetry so often does, a somewhat archaic style. This is not more 'correct' or 'standard' than the modern English of unpremeditated talk, and its use in conversation is naturally censured as talking 'like a book'.

This distinction once grasped, we can approach some other questions. Barham in his *Ingoldsby Legends* made the conclave of ecclesiastics 'regardless of grammar' when, on sight of the Jackdaw of Rheims dishevelled and dispirited, they all cried, 'That's him.' Yet does any English speaker, whatever dialect be natural to him, when he stands in the dark without a closed door and is unexpectedly challenged from within, 'Who's there?', give any answer in his flurry but 'Me'? We shall conclude, then, that for modern Standard English speech the grammatical rule may be such that after verbs of every kind—copulative no less than transitive—the first person pronoun singular, at least, is put in the Objective Case. Certainly, it is common enough to hear 'If you were me'.

It remains, however, that up to the present our careful writers have repudiated this construction. No doubt they have been influenced by the pronouncement of the grammarians, but since the use seems to have originated at the outset in a solecism arising out of some analogy true or false, we may well acquiesce in the veto on its entrance into deliberate writing. Otherwise, were the objection to it merely the difficulty of analysing its conformity to the ordinary categories of grammatical principle, grammar should, it cannot be doubted, give way to usage or idiom. 'Idioms', as it has been picturesquely said, 'are rebels against Grammar, with which the powers of literature have made peace and agreed to waive their claim to conformity.' Thus grammar has to accept such idioms—inexplicable from the standpoint of syntactical absolutism—as appear in

'*than whom* none higher sat' ;

'O for the mind of Wordsworth, *he* who sings.'

We have seen that *It's me* may make some plea for toleration in unstudied speech: that *if I were he* is, nevertheless, usual, justifies us in limiting the rule to the first person singular, and accordingly in treating 'That's him' as a grammatical use which is not at present heard on the lips of most educated speakers, i. e. as we have seen, of those who speak the modern Standard English dialect.

It is perhaps rather a matter of accidence than of syntax, but it may here be pointed out that the modern Standard speech still retains in some measure of vital use the subjunctive forms *be* and *were*. The literary dialect has still more uses of these forms—uses now obsolete in modern speech ; but it is in other dialects than the Standard that the forms have atrophied so far that disuse has ended in

dissolution and disappearance. At present speakers of the Standard dialect still employ distinctive subjunctive forms in sentences like the following: *If only I (he, she, it) were there! I will defy it, whatever it be. If I (he, she, it) were taller, I could reach.*

Not infrequently careful speakers will say also, when it is implied that the case supposed is unlikely: *If I (he, she, it) be then alive, it shall be done. If he (she, it) come, the signal shall be fired.* A writer of poetry or of elevated prose still will employ such additional constructions as appear in: *Be careful lest I (he, she, it) be watching.*

Two familiar examples of the subjunctive may be recorded in passing—‘*God save the King*’ and ‘*Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves*’—though how most Englishmen are losing their sense of the subjunctive is again shown by the fact that the latter quotation is often perverted now into ‘*Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule*’ or even ‘*Britannia rules*’.

It is venial and perhaps excusable in conversation that strict syntax should crumble away. The speaker’s thought passes on to take other forms before his words have emerged from his lips. He alters his precise point of view, and while his first words begin the expression of one thought which comes uppermost in his mind at the outset, in the sequel he moulds another thought into a sentence of another type. Sometimes we may surmise that these constructions are what may be called ‘portmanteologisms’ (to use Mr. C. L. Graves’s word), corresponding in syntax to what Lewis Carroll originated in vocabulary when he created ‘chortle’ by telescoping *snort* and *chuckle*, and ‘slithey’ from *lithe* and *slimy*.

A letter again to an intimate friend will put on paper just such easy talk, and therefore have it in actual purpose

to employ such kaleidoscopic grammar. More studied composition has not the same excuse to make for such laxity in construction. Examples of this thoughtless negligence may be seen in the following sentences:

‘This is one of the most interesting books that *has* ever been written.’ ‘This officer caught two natives *whom he considered had been* engaged in the crime of stock theft’ (*Morning Post*, 12th Sept. 1918). ‘Neither provocation nor resentment *were* discerned’ (Jane Austen, *Emma*, chap. 21). ‘She is at least fifteen years older *than him*’ (Miss Mary Cholmondeley, *Notwithstanding*, chap. 38).

What are we to say of such a sentence as ‘These kind of politicians are always objectionable’? The grammarian recommends ‘This kind of politician’ or ‘Politicians of this kind’. But the amateur always feels that neither of these expressions conveys his exact meaning. He is trying to put in a condensed way what can only be put fully by the cumbrous ‘These politicians and all others of the same kind’ or ‘Politicians of the same kind as these politicians’. As a consequence, he persists in using what he finds a conveniently brief way of expressing his precise thought. Writers who are not aiming at giving their composition the air of easy talk still decline this construction. Jane Austen naturally makes one speaker in *Pride and Prejudice* (chap. 10) say ‘I always delight in overthrowing *these kind of schemes*’, and another in *Emma* (chap. 43) ‘*These kind of things* are very well at Christmas’, but Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera* (xxi. 19) does not hesitate to write: ‘Do those sort of people know what love is?’¹

Perhaps, then, we may acquiesce in the construction for conversational use, explaining it by saying that *these*

¹ We may notice that as early as 1551 we find ‘*These sort of ppeople are named . . . (so and so)*’.

kind of is an adjectival phrase equivalent to the Latin *talcs*, and *kind of* is a fixed and indeclinable form appended to *these* or *those* and giving a vaguer sense to them—as if we said *these-like*.

Here a word should perhaps be said of what is called the *split infinitive*, i. e. such a collocation as 'to fully understand'. Here again history may guide us as to how we should view this construction. Anciently, the infinitive with us as with many others was recognized by a distinctive suffix. Before this, to express purpose, the preposition *to* was used, e. g. 'they came to see'. In later times, when the distinctive inflexion had disappeared, the infinitive for general purposes of grammar came to be of the form of 'to be', 'to come'. Some vestiges, it is true, of the older use without the preposition remain in such constructions as 'I can see', 'I dare say'. Expressions like these were in too frequent use to be remodelled—although in recent times 'I dare to say' has crept into vogue to give a rather different implication from that which inheres in 'I dare say'. Notwithstanding these survivals, the general view has come to be that the English infinitive takes the form of a verb with the preposition *to* prefixed. Hence has arisen the doubt with which we started: does this prefix adhere so closely that nothing in the way of a qualifying adverb may be interposed? Might Shakespeare with propriety have written 'To be or *to not be*: that is the question'? It is perhaps not without significance that on the one hand French inserts such qualifying adverbs and negatives between a preposition and the infinitive, and on the other hand German feels the adhesion of the two to be so close that with a compound verb we have to say, e. g., *einzugehen*. We may infer that it is the native instinct of English speech that revolts against the split

infinitive. In the Prayer Book we find this instinct uniformly triumphant. The *to* appears before the infinitive at all times with the single exception that, where two infinitives come together governing one object which follows the second infinitive, the preposition may be omitted before the second. Thus a bride promises 'to love, cherish and to obey' her husband. Yet even in such a case we sometimes have the *to*, e.g. 'to have and to hold'. This rule clears up the construction in the Ascensiontide collect : 'We beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless ; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place.' Our rule would make *exalt* necessarily an imperative, not an infinitive for which we should have *to exalt*. That this is correct is shown, it is satisfactory to find, by the Latin Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth's time, where an imperative appears. Still, we must not be too dogmatic on the point. If *to* were absolutely indispensable, how should Milton have come to write—

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?

Would not 'to meditate' have been required? We must acknowledge, then, that what we may call the example of the Romance languages has prevented the *compound* infinitive from becoming quite inflexible, and has left some plea to urge for the split infinitive. Only it may be remarked that to any one whose ear has become accustomed to the stricter use, the music of what may be called the true native form is so incomparably more mellow that he will always desire to have its cadence in his speech. If Byron writes in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* :

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene . . .

we shall remember that that poet's grammatical habits are in other regards not impeccable, and shall still think the other the better way.

On an earlier page we laid it down that a grammatical rule must be supported by the facts and practice of some English dialects as well as by the abstract theories of absolute Grammar. This grammatical canon will serve to determine another doubt. Some five years ago the refrain of a popular song declared, "You don't know Nellie dear like I do," said the saucy little bird on Nellie's hat.' In several of our English dialects *like* is not only an adjective but a conjunction. Is it so in modern Standard speech? It has been so used by William Morris in 'dreading the model day *like I used to dread* Sunday'.

Many careful speakers, however, do not accept the use as belonging to the Standard dialect: they say *as*. Many more, who may, in careless conversation or in a letter written with undress ease to a friend, use *like*, prune it out of their writing. When we ask whether the use is universal in the other English dialects, we promptly discover that we are justified in rejecting the use at present from Standard speech. In certain districts only—the West Country, e. g., and the West Midlands—has the use developed. The philologist tells us that *like* is in origin the same word as *lych* in *lych-gate*. The significance of *boylike* was originally 'in the very body, form, and fashion of a boy'. Thus when we read in the Psalms 'Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God', the sense is 'in the self-same fashion as', 'precisely as'. The abbreviation of 'like as' into 'like' has proceeded in some dialects only, and those

speakers of Standard English who knew the use from some other dialect have not hitherto succeeded in establishing it in the Standard speech.

A similar use appears in such a sentence as the following, taken from one of J. R. Illingworth's letters: 'Porto-fino—a pretty looking little place, but I should think smelly—rather *like* Sennen would be without any tide to wash things clean.' Here in deliberate writing we should say '*like what* Sennen would be'.

It should be unnecessary to point out that uses familiar in other dialects but universally refused by English writers are equally abhorrent to the Standard English speech. Mr. Arthur Sketchley gave us Mrs. Brown ubiquitously unwinding her skein of talk with the incessant '*which*' to piece her discursive notions together.

While we are speaking of the use of *which*, a word may be said of a construction to which, perhaps from prejudice, objection is often taken. Sometimes, after an adjective to qualify a noun, a relative clause is added. In Latin Cicero and Livy felt at times that this was so precisely parallel in function to the qualifying adjective that they joined it on with an *and*. In English Addison, Thackeray, and others have done the same, but purists find disagreeable such a collocation as: 'This is a work, stimulating and original, *and which* must exercise a profound effect on the popular mind.'

We said at the outset that in general the syntactical rules of English Grammar are those of the modern Standard dialect, and that they are therefore learnt by every child, so that there is no occasion here to dwell at length on this side of the dialect. A few constructions, however, may be mentioned which are regular in certain provincial dialects but are unknown to Standard English:

1. In Northern and North-Midland speech, after such words as *want*, *wish*, and even *like*, where Standard English uses the past participle, there is used a form now identical with the present participle, though it probably has developed from something else. Thus, while Standard English says *Do you want this parcel taken to the post?* these dialects say *taking*.

2. Welsh and Irish seldom, if ever, use indirect questions, at any rate with the construction used in Standard English. Thus, instead of *I wonder whether* (or *if*) *he will come*, or *whether he went*, Welsh says *I wonder will he come* or *did he go*. While Standard English says *I asked him if he knew*, Irish says *I asked him did he know*. Similarly the Standard speech knows nothing of such uses—familiar to other dialects—as:

‘The man *as* (=who, or that) gave me that was blind.’

‘She told me *as how* (=that) it thundered yesterday.’

‘Then *this here* (=this) man picked up *that there* (=that) brick and threw it at me.’

‘I only hope *as* (=that) nobody’s laid his hands on the bottles.’

‘I could *not help but* laugh’ (=‘I could not help laughing’, or in more ceremonious English ‘I could not but laugh’).

‘The man *what* (=that or who) said so was a liar.’

‘When he said that, he *mustn’t* (=can’t) have known.’

‘*Were you speaking* (=Did you speak) to him?’ [In the Standard dialect the form *were you speaking?* is confined to use with reference to a special moment of time contemporaneous with something else, e.g. ‘*Were you laughing* when I saw you, or at that moment?’]

‘I haven’t seen him, *since he’s* (=he came) back.’

‘He ought to have gone, *hadn’t* (=oughtn’t) he?’

[*Ought* is in origin a past tense of *owe*. The Standard dialect distinguishes the time of the obligation by the tense of the following infinitive. This may be criticized as illogical, but it is the Standard idiom and immutable. The uses of other dialects, e. g. *you had ought to go*, have not effected a lodgement in the Standard speech, and thus the interrogative form also is absolutely limited to the one form *ought*, whether the obligation be past or present, and *ought* is felt to be itself an auxiliary which cannot therefore be decomposed into such a form as *did I owe?* or *had I ought?*]

Further, a few forms of syntactical expression may be given at random which modern Standard English has dropped from use:

‘What went ye out *for to* (=to) see?’

‘*Except* (=unless) a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom.’

The use of *without* as a conjunction equivalent to *unless* is very widespread in local speech, but has disappeared entirely from the language of the cultivated: *I shan't go out without you do*.

Finally, something may be said on what to some English speakers is a very perplexing problem, viz. the use of *will* and *shall*, and of *would* and *should*.

Perhaps indeed no subtlety of English idiom is so delicate as the distinction of use between these words. Originating, like all other auxiliaries, in emphatic connotation, they combined so commonly with other verbs as to have the edge of their meaning blunted. Thus *I shall* meant ‘I am under obligation’, *I will* meant ‘I am determined’. From these original connotations there were gradually precipitated in the alembic of current speech the distinctions familiar to us to-day. But the English

speech used in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, and—through Irish and Scotch migration to the Dominions—in Canada and Australia has not achieved the same refinement of use, and the distinctions so inevitable to an Englishman seem to present almost insuperable difficulties to those who are bred up to speak English in those countries. An English-born son of an Irishman has betrayed his parental origin in spite of his English environment—the speech in the home confused his idiom. It may be interesting to add that in Holy Scripture the distinction is complicated by the fact that where Deity speaks the future is expressed as the determination of His fiat. Moreover, the Prayer Book version of the Psalms does not exhibit the distinctions of to-day, but is a monument of the stage of development attained at the moment of its composition.

To the English-born speaker of English, what follows will be of interest only as an attempt to formulate rules for the idioms native to his tongue; for others it may serve to suggest clues for the detection of aberrations from the Standard idiom and to give types of phrases on which first conscious imitation and afterwards unconscious analogy may model.

To begin with, then, we must in the case of each pair of auxiliaries separate the use in questions from that in statements. We can then lay down these general principles:

A. For *Will* and *Shall*.

1. IN STATEMENTS the ordinary future form is *shall* of the first person, and *will* of the second and third. But where the speaker's words imply a resolve, a promise, a threat or an emphatic intention on his part, *will* is used of the first person; and where they import compulsion

and that he is issuing a command, or at least that he has control over those to whom or of whom he is speaking, *shall* of the second and third. Regarded from another point of view, *I shall* may be said to indicate a design independent of the person addressed, while *I will* suggests that the person addressed has some interest in the action designed.

2. IN QUESTIONS *shall* alone, with a special exception noted below (p. 98), is used of the first person. This is natural, since it is plain that the sense of resolve, promise, threat is inconsistent with an interrogation as to what *I* or *we* are to do. But with the other persons a different use obtains. Here *shall* or *will* is employed in the question according as either is to be expected in the answer. Thus when we wish to elicit a promise we say 'Will you come to the theatre with me to-morrow?' in preparation for the answer 'I will' or 'I won't', but when we wish to know another person's independent plans so as to make our own, we say 'Shall you be at the theatre to-morrow?' in expectation of the answer 'I shall' or 'I shan't'. It is here that we find one of the sources of divergence between the Standard use and that of, e. g., the Irish-born speaker. The Irishman applies to the first person also the rule that the auxiliary appropriate to the answer should be used in the question. Hence when he is on the roof of a burning house he says to the firemen below '*Will* I break my neck, if I jump?' because their answer will be 'You will' or 'You won't'. As we have seen, the Standard idiom has '*Shall* I break my neck?'

The reader may now be invited to consider the following examples of the Standard use: '*I shall* miss the train, unless I can get a taxi.' '*I shall* be very glad to do what

I can.' 'I *will* gladly do what I can.' 'I *shall* be pleased to come.' 'I *will* do so with pleasure.' 'I *shall* be greatly obliged if you *will* kindly return my umbrella.' 'You *will* be sorry to hear that I have not got my degree.' 'Will you marry me?'—'I *will*.' 'Shall you go to church?'—'I *shall*.' 'Will you take me with you?'—'I *will*.' 'I *shall* be most grateful.' 'You *will* be doing me a great kindness.' A little consideration will show that in statements of the first person either *will* or *shall* might often be used, the choice between them being determined by the precise tone and implication of the speaker. Thus, we can have both 'I shall be there by twelve' and 'I will be there by twelve', but the latter has a tone of promise as to an equal, the former announces the speaker's plans as if part of the inevitable process of the world's course and not dependent on his volition. So, too, a rebellious child, bidden to do something, not only refuses with 'I won't', declaring that he will exert his will against obedience but, further and finally to assert his determination, says 'I shan't', as much as to say: 'My refusal depends not on my will, powerful or puny, but is inherent in the very constitution of things so that my non-compliance is unalterably settled.'

B. For *Would* and *Should*¹ (apart from the rule given below about reported speech).

1. With the first person, *would* is used when the speaker implies a resolve in his declaration, while *should* is used when he merely declares what under certain conditions implied or expressed his action will be. (This distinction will be further discussed in the next paragraph.) With the second and third persons *would* is used in all

¹ The use of *should* in the sense of *ought to* needs no comment. It is used with all persons alike.

cases. Thus we say, 'If pigs were to fly, I *should* be astonished,—perhaps you and John *would* not.' On the other hand, 'I *would* kill him, if I could.'

2. In a dependent clause expressing a condition, *should* is used for all persons, e. g. 'If I *should* get the offer, I should not refuse it.' (We may observe here that in the main clause, we could have 'I *would* not refuse it', giving a different implication. With *would* the speaker announces his resolve, the choice he has made in the matter, he almost promises that he will act in the way he says; with *should* he merely states the course he will take, as if it were the inevitable consequence of the condition being fulfilled, and as if no choice or resolve on his part were needed.) A few more examples may be given :

'If it *should* be raining when you start to meet me, bring an umbrella.' 'Should you chance to see a policeman, tell him about the burglar.' 'If you had been at Derby, you *would* have seen him.' 'I never *would* tell a lie.' 'I *should* like to hear what you have to say for yourself.' 'I *would* ask you to remember where you are.' 'I *should* be very grateful to you if you *would* give me your advice.' 'You *would* be doing me a material service.' 'I *should* be greatly indebted to you if you *would* be so kind.'

We must now point out the special rule which comes into play when these uses become subordinate clauses in speech reported indirectly, i. e. not in the speaker's precise words. In such a case, with one exception noted at the end of this section, in spite of the pronouns being changed *would* remains *would* and *should* remains *should*, and, further, after a present or future in the principal verb, *will* and *shall* are unchanged, while after a past, *will*

becomes *would* and *shall, should*. Thus if I have the thought, 'If James asks to borrow my knife, I shall say, No', I may at once convey the thought to Harold by saying 'I think that if James asks to borrow my knife, I shall say, No', or the next day I may tell him what I thought by saying 'I thought that if James asked to borrow my knife, I should say, No' (to say 'I would say, No' would give a different implication, viz. that my thought had been 'I will say, No'). Similarly, I could say to Christopher immediately after, 'I am just telling Harold that if James asks, I shall say, No', or a little later 'I told Harold that I should say, No'. Or Harold might say to Christopher 'Philip tells me that if James asks he *shall* say, No', or afterwards 'Philip told me that he *should* say, No'. The last two instances are particularly worthy of notice. Under the influence of the far commoner construction in which 'he *will* (or *would*) say' occurs, most speakers are in danger of blurring this clean-cut English distinction which instantly reveals who is meant by the *he* in such sentences: e.g. 'Philip tells me that if he ever meets Edward he *shall* certainly knock him down' (i.e. Philip will knock down Edward), and 'Philip doesn't think much of James and tells me that if he and Edward have a fight, he *will* certainly run away' (i.e. James will run).

A few more examples may be given: 'You *shall* pay for this some day.' 'Some day you *will* be sorry.' 'You *shall* do what I ask.' 'Shall we have a game of whist?' 'Shall I put some more coal on?' 'Will you have the blinds drawn, sir?'—'We *will*.' 'Will he come to see me?'—'He *will*, I hope.' 'Shall he call to see you, when he is in your neighbourhood?' 'He asked me whether I *would* sing' (the actual question being, 'Will

you sing?') 'Shall you get your degree this June?'—'I shall.' 'Will you try to get your degree this June?'—'I will.' 'You will come to-morrow, if you possibly can, won't you?'—'I will.' 'You will never do it.' 'He will certainly not be in time.' 'My counsel told me that I should be acquitted.' This brings us to the one special exception to which reference was made above. The Standard idiom¹ makes the first person so pre-eminent that where I am reporting what some one said to me, I express it not in terms of what he said to me but of the thought I entertained. Thus in the example just given, the construction is moulded not by my counsel's words 'You will be acquitted' but by my thought 'I shall be acquitted'. Similarly we say 'The manager told us that we should have to do it', our thought being 'We shall have to do it'. One other curious case must be noticed: its appearance of exceptionality is superficial only. 'Will you hurt him, John, if you catch him?'—'Will I hurt him? I'll kill him.' Here the exceptional 'Will I?' is due to its being really subordinate to a suppressed 'do you ask?' Not dissimilar is such a sentence as 'If we win this time, will we let them off?'—'By Jove, not much.'

Before we leave the subject, we may quote a passage from Marion Crawford's *Marietta* (p. 61), where, as the reader will see, the author has reflected indirectly, by his deft uses of *would* and *should*, the changing shades of his heroine's meditations. 'She *would* go over', so he reads her heart, 'to the glass house . . . and now and then she *would* go into the close furnace . . . or Zorzi *would* come out for something; she *should* be near him,

¹ This is of a piece with the Standard rule which makes questions in the first person a law to themselves (p. 94).

she *should* see his face . . . and she *would* say to herself: He loves me. . . . Since she knew it, she was sure that she *should* see it in his face. . . . There *would* be glances when he thought she was not watching him, his colour *would* come and go . . . and he *would* do her some little service, now and then, in which the sweet truth, against his will, *should* tell itself to her again and again. It *would* be a delicious and ever-remembered day.'

APPENDIX

Lists of words, whose vowels are sounded differently in different dialects. In the Standard dialect all the words in the same column have the same vowel sounds, to be distinguished from those of the words in the other columns :

<i>With the ũ sound (see p. 34).</i>	<i>With the ōō sound.</i>	<i>With the ōō sound.</i>
cub, dub, hub, hubbub, public, rub, sub, tub.	pōoh-(pōohed)	boo ! shoe.
buck, cluck, duck, huckster, luck, muck, Puck, ruck, suck, tuck; bucket.	book, brook, cook, forsook, look, nook, rook, took; bouquet; looker.	Luke, lukewarm, spook; lucre.
bud, cud, mud, ruddy, spuds, stud, suds; shudder; cuddle, fuddle, huddle, muddle, puddle; flood, blood.	good, hood, stood, wood; could, should, would; pudding, Buddha.	cooed, food, 'mood, rood, rude; (pōoh)-pōohed, shoed; who'd; poodle.
budge, budget, cudgel, dudgeon, fudge, nudge, smudge.		boojum.
buff, cuff, plum-duff, luff, muff, puff, ruff, stuff; enough, rough, sough, tough; buffet (<i>blow</i>).	buffet (<i>refreshment bar</i>).	aloof, hoof, oof, roof, woof.
bug, dug, hug, lug, lugger, mug, pug, plug, rug, rugger, tug; struggle.	sugar.	
cull, dull, dully, gull, hull, mullet, sully; catapult, culture, emulsion, fulcrum, fulminate, insult, pulse, refulgent, revulsion, vulture; rowlock (= rullock); colour.	bull, bullock, bully, full, fully, fulfil, pull, pullet; wool, woollen, woolly; Boulogne.	cool, coolly, coolie, fool, pool, tool; cooler.

With the ŭ sound (see p. 34).

drum, glum, gum, hum,
lumber, mum, rum,
scum, sum; crumb,
dumb, thumb; come,
some; company.

bun, dun, fun, gun,
Hun, nun, pun, pun-
ner, run, sun, tun;
none, one, once, son,
ton, won.

cup, pup, sup, up; sup-
per.

curry, flurry, hurry;
currier, furrier.

bus, cuss, discuss, fuss,
grampus, Gus, pus.

bust, custard, disgust,
dust, duster, lust, must,
mustard, rust, rustic;
bustle, hustle, tussle.

brush, cushat, gush,
lush, mush, mushroom,
rush, tush; concussion,
percussion, Russian,
luscious.

but, butter, button, cut,
nut, rut.

hutch, crutch, much,
touch, escutcheon.

Cuthbert.

buzz, fuzzy, guzzle,
muzzle, puzzle; does,
dozen, cousin.

With the ō sound.

broom, room (see p. 29),
woman.

soon (see p. 30).

hurrah; courier.

puss.

bush, bushel, cushion,
push.

foot, soot.

butcher.

bosom, gooseberry (= *gōōzbrŷ*), hussar (as pronounced in the Army: most speakers say *hazāh'*).

With the ōō sound.

bloom, boom, doom,
gloom, loom; combe;
rheum.

boon, coon, Doone,
loon, noon, Poona,
soon (see p. 30); rune.

coop, hoop, loop, poop,
stoop, whoop; soup,
stoup.

Courland, houri.

goose, loose, moose,
noose.

boost, roost.

douche, ablution,
Koosh.

boot, booty, coot, hoot,
loot, moot, root, shoot,
toot; brute, lute.

Gooch.

uncouth, sooth, tooth,
youth; ruth, truth,
sleuth; booth.

booze, foozle; lose,
whose; ruse.

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